CHESS

MIDDLEGAME PLANNING

PETER ROMANOVSKY

Translated from the Russian by Jimmy Adams

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Translator's Preface

In the prolific world of chess literature, books on the middlegame are comparatively rare - and those on planning even rarer. When the author happens to be a Soviet champion and honoured trainer, then the publication of such a work as *Chess Middlegame Planning* arouses even greater interest. Peter Romanovsky (1892-1964) served his chess apprenticeship in pre-Revolutionary Russia during the same period as his personal friend Alexander Alekhine, to whom he was runner-up in the very first Soviet championship of 1920. After Alekhine's subsequent defection to the West, Romanovsky himself twice won the Soviet title and achieved fine results ahead of famous grandmasters in the few international tournaments which were held in the USSR during the 20s and 30s. He also became closely aquainted with those other great world champions, Lasker and Capablanca, who both spent a fair amount of time in Russia.

After the Second World War, Romanovsky retired from competitive play and assumed a major role as a trainer, writer and populariser of chess. He lectured on the game from 1947-57 at Moscow University, was on the editorial board of the official *Chess in the USSR* magazine from its inception, and wrote 16 books. After his death, many unpublished manuscripts were discovered amongst his archives - regrettably most of these treasures still remain unpublished to this day.

A cultured man with varied interests, in particular music and literature, he smiled when once asked why he did not put more effort into becoming a grandmaster - "Oh, because in life there are many attractions which I did not want to pass by...."

In the *Soviet School of Chess*, Kotov and Yudovich write "Romanovsky is an artist and seeker. He strives, in his games, to prove or refute one or another strategic idea, to create interesting and beautiful combinations. His *Middlegame* is one of the best books in the world's chess literature; it has served as a guide for many Soviet masters .... By his day-to-day penetrating analyses of his own games and the games of others, in which he seeks out unnoticed possibilities, Romanovsky sets the youth an example of how to work on self-improvement. He teaches young players not only the fine points of modern technique but the evolution of chess ideas and the history of the game."

Chess Middlegame Planning was published in Moscow 1960. Its originality and practical value, allied to a colourful literary style, made it an immediate classic. It is now offered to readers for the first time in the English language.

Jimmy Adams
London 1990

Introduction

The central stage of the chess game is called the middlegame. It is characterised by a comparatively large number of active forces of both fighting sides. Also characteristic for this segment of the chess game is the passive position of the king and the emergence of continuous threats in that area of the struggle where it is placed. The consistently arising threats, associated with a single idea, represent an attack, of which the object in the middlegame frequently becomes the king's position. The middlegame is thereby distinguished from the endgame, where a comparatively small number of forces are operating, where an attack on the king is rare, where, finally, the king assumes an active role. It is precisely this abrupt contrast in the role of the king which is the main sign distinguishing the endgame stage from the middlegame.

It goes without saying that the scantiness of forces operating in the endgame will appreciably narrow the range of creative ideas, the diversity of which, on the other hand, forms the distinguishing feature of the middlegame. The theory of many endings bears a finished character, and a knowledge of technique, that is the application of theoretical laws and principles in practice, naturally is sharply increased in the endgame. The middlegame struggle most fully and vividly reflects the creative substance of chess art. The most important creative factor of the chess struggle - the combination - is displayed chiefly in the central stage. In the middlegame, there is the strongest stimulation for imagination and creative thought by a chessplayer, and the most distinct expression both of purely human traits of his nature (temperament, boldness, inventiveness etc.) and features of his chess style, creative outlook and the ideological tendency to which he belongs. It is no coincidence that middlegame material, if looked at in a historical connection, allows us to very clearly trace the evolution of chess ideas.

Besides the middlegame and the endgame, there is also the opening - the initial stage of the game, the theory of which discusses the question of the expedient development of pieces. At the beginning of the opening stage, within the first 3-5 moves, the maximum number of forces are operating and in the majority of cases they remain very numerous right up to the approach

of the middlegame. In this respect, the characters of the game in the opening and central stage are close to one another. However there is one substantial difference: the opening ideas are concentrated around the full mobilisation of forces whereas in the middlegame the plan arises from the possibility of an operation by already mobilised pieces, which immeasurably broadens the creative horizon of ideas.

Of course there must exist a very close connection between the opening and the middlegame. In the opening one should not simply develop the pieces, but place them in such a way that they are able to fulfil the role intended for them at the first stage of the central phase. In other words, the middlegame scheme must logically continue the opening line of play, blending with it into a single systematic plan of action.

Planning

A: General Principles

1 Basic Understanding

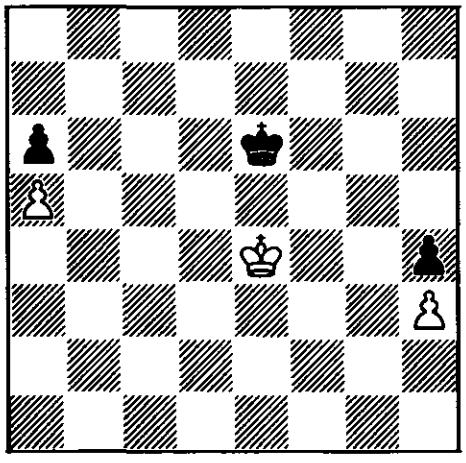
One can, without exaggeration, say that the formation and carrying out of a plan of action is the main task in the course of the process of the chess struggle.

A skilfully conceived and purposefully executed plan serves as a true token of success.

A skilfully conceived plan - first and foremost this means a correctly mapped out objective which the chessplayer must direct his thoughts towards achieving. This problem is far from simple, and many difficulties arise on the way to solving it. However, a correctly mapped out objective is only half the matter. It is not enough to contemplate a plan, it is also necessary to solve another, no less serious problem - to carry it out. Of course, it is necessary to look at ways of achieving the objective with an outline of the objective itself. And what is more, the choice of the objective to some extent must be determined by the possibility of achieving it. This possibility, however, has to be assessed in highly relative terms, since one chessplayer's striving for an objective will run across the will and intentions of the opponent. It might also happen that the counter-action of the opponent forces a change of plan and even a transfer to defence. And yet, despite the above-mentioned relativity, it is not possible to conduct a game without drawing up a plan and without directing one's operations in accordance with it.

In order to give very simple examples of how to formulate an

idea of a plan, we look at two elementary positions from the end-game.



White to move.

His position is better since he will easily win the h4 pawn. Is this sufficient for victory? Indeed, it is sufficient, but only if White correctly maps out an idea and a method of realising it. His plan ought to consist of the following:

- the first stage consists of the win of the h4 pawn;
- in the second stage, White makes his way with the king to the a6 pawn and, exploiting the fact that the enemy king will be diverted from the queen's flank by his own passed pawn on the h-file, also wins this pawn;
- finally, he promotes the a-pawn into a queen and finishes off the opponent's lone king.

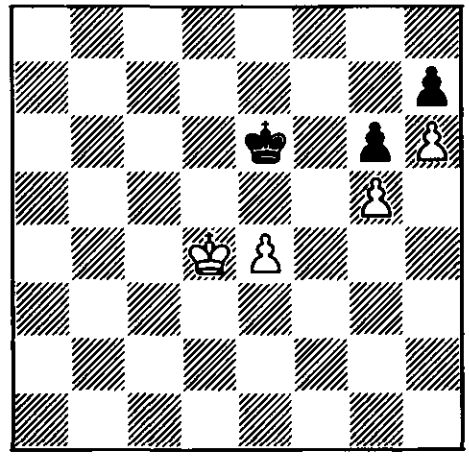
And so: **1 Kf4**

There are two possible plans of defence for Black:

- one - to make his way with the king to the a5 pawn, capture it and try to queen his passed pawn on the a-file;
- the other - to attack the White pawn on the king's flank at that moment when the king has set off for the queen's flank to the a6 pawn.

The first plan must be discarded at once, since a simple calculation shows that the White pawn reaches h8 far quicker (8 moves are necessary for this - Kg4, Kxh4, Kg5, and h4-h5-h6-h7-h8Q) than Black's does to a1 (this operation requires 10 moves - Kd5, Kc4, Kb5, Kxa5, Kb4 and five moves with the pawn). There remains the second plan.

1 ... Kf6 2 Kg4 Kg6 3 Kxh4 Kh6 4 Kg4 Kg6 5 Kf4 Kh5 6 Ke4 Kh4 7 Kd5 Kxh3 8 Kc5 Kg4 9 Kb6 Kf5 10 Kxa6 Ke6 11 Kb7, and the unhindered pawn reaches the queening square.



In this example, White's position looks even more favourable. He already has an extra passed pawn and the plan of play seems obvious: at the cost of the passed pawn, to penetrate with the king to g7 so as to do away with the h7

pawn. However, there is a well-known type of position from end-game theory in which the weaker side shadows the enemy king and achieves a draw. It turns out that the present position is one of these.

1 e5 Ke7 2 Kd5 Kd7 3 e6+ Ke8 4 Ke5 Ke7

Black tries to prevent the king getting to f6, but White still has the possibility of achieving this.

5 Kd5 Ke8 6 Kd4 Kd8 7 Ke4 Ke8 8 Kd5 Ke7

If 8 ... Kd8, then 9 Kd6 and the e-pawn goes on to queen.

9 Ke5 Ke8 10 Kf6

The first stage of the plan - penetrating with the king to the f6 square - is completed.

10 ... Kf8 11 e7+ Ke8 12 Kg7

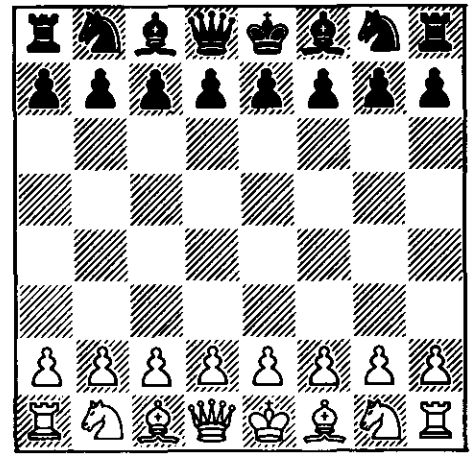
It seems that also the second problem of the plan has been solved, but ...

12 ... Kxe7 13 Kxh7 Kf7 14 Kh8 Kf8 15 h7 Kf7 stalemate.

White did not achieve his objective thanks to fine resistance by Black, whose defence revealed an interesting drawing resource.

In positions where there are considerable forces operating (a characteristic of the central stage), the essence of the plan remains the same, but, of couse, on the whole the game is complicated immeasurably. The defending side will have available far more possibilities of resistance, indeed also the attacking side has in prospect to make a choice between many objectives and ways to achieve them. The ability to choose the best and most correct from these is usually determined by the correctness of the evaluation of the position.

Consider the starting position of the chess game.



Many inexperienced amateurs assume that in the starting position it is not possible to draw up a relatively real plan of action, since this is very complicated in that on each of White's moves, Black has the possibility of replying in various ways. To some extent this is of course true. And yet, nowadays, in a period of stormy growth of creative ideas in chess art, and hence a continuous enrichment of its theory, we know only too well that the opening position is unclear. Already after the first, second and third moves, variations are obtained out of which arise objectives, not only in the sphere of purely the opening, but also in the whole of the future struggle. In selecting his first move, be it 1 c4, 1 d4, 1 Nf3 or 1 e4, the modern

chessplayer is already contemplating several positions which he wants to achieve in the opening and which, in their turn, will be for him the initial point for working out a general strategical plan, which he will realise mainly in the middlegame. The planned process of the chess struggle can be subdivided into three stages:

- the preparation for the general battle;
- the struggle for the advantage, and
- the realisation of the advantage.

The success of the first stage, to a considerable extent, is decided in the opening. The main and most complicated stage is undoubtedly the second. The third stage is getting results.

2: Concrete Ideas

The most purposeful, the most well-founded and therefore having the most chances of being successfully realised, are plans at the basis of which lie concrete ideas.

With concrete ideas one should take into account those ideas in which the thoughts of a chessplayer embrace both special-purpose objectives, arising out of real positional considerations, and ways to achieve them, since the latter provides the greatest possible detailing of them.

If, however, the objective chosen is incorrect or the way to achieving it shrouded in a haze, then the idea does not prove to be concrete and almost certainly will be doomed to failure. Not without reason, in chess literature, in such cases one talks of "chasing after shadows".

It is necessary to distinguish between strategical and tactical ideas.

Strategy - this is the plan as a whole; tactics - separate operations, leading to its fulfilment. If, graphically, a strategical plan is represented in the form of a chain, then tactical ideas make up its link. Tactical ideas are the means of realising a strategical idea.

A concrete strategical idea represents the main overall task in a given stage of the struggle. It is based on the created positional situation ensuing from it and allows a rough mapping out of a path to solve the problems with which one is confronted.

An incorrect choice of the objective should be regarded as a strategical mistake, as also are moves which are in conflict with the projected plan. A tactical mistake is a error in calculation, which overlooks the opponent's reply, all of which makes difficult or absolutely impossible the carrying out of a concrete strategical idea.

There will be positions in the process of the struggle where it is very difficult to think of a real objective and, consequently, to work out a concrete idea. In such

cases one has to be content with a general appraisal of considerations, directing concrete thoughts in the main to a prevention of the opponent's threats, while special-purpose objects of the plan have not come to light and the struggle has not joined the rails of concrete ideas. Sometimes, in a locked pawn chain, the game through necessity assumes the form of more or less lengthy piece manoeuvres.

In such cases the question arises of an approximate form of action, which perhaps is more difficult than even considering a plan. The objective is very hazy or in general absent, while the moves assume either a waiting character or have only a narrow tactical motivation.

The process of play under conditions where there is no concrete object for thought (and consequently there cannot be concrete ideas), often proceeds under the slogan of equilibrium and ends in a drawn outcome. Creatively this process will usually be of little interest, with the ideas of the two sides being colourless.

We examine, in the light of the above-mentioned planned side and concrete ideas, the following game.

Queen's Indian Defence
White: **K.Klaman**
Black: **V.Smyslov**
(15th USSR Championship 1947)
1 d4 Nf6 2 Nf3 b6

Into this move goes a great planning idea, consisting of the creation of strong piece pressure on the central d5 and e4 squares, and, if White does not duly counteract this, then also of the occupation of the e4 square by the knight with a subsequent consolidation of it by ... f5. This sort of set-up, met sometimes in the Dutch Defence, promises Black good attacking prospects on the king's flank.

From the modest opening move with the pawn on the queen's flank, right up to mate of the opponent's king - this is the true range of a concrete creative idea!

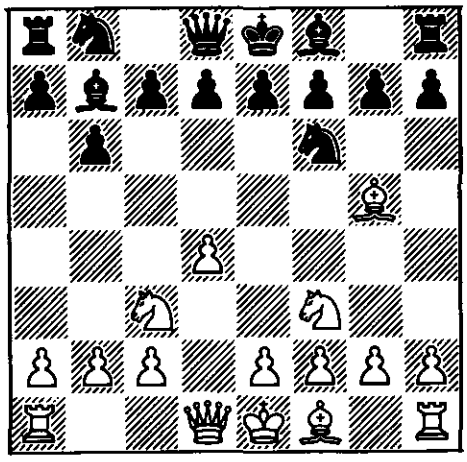
3 Nc3

White's plan consists of organising counter-pressure on the e4 square and preparing the move e4. Pawns standing side by side on e4 and d4, in chess theory are called the pawn centre. We will in due course give particular attention to this important positional element.

For the present, however, we note that the pawn centre is one of the most powerful forces in the struggle for the central squares and in the majority of cases one can look upon it as a positional achievement. Therefore the threat of constructing a pawn centre usually evokes an appropriate counteraction from the opposite side.

3 ... Bb7 4 Bg5

A difficult and tense moment has been reached already on the 4th move.



White is ready to carry out his threat (Bxf6 and e4). Black is in a thoughful mood, whether to prevent this and, if so, in what way. A good method of contending with a pawn centre is by an immediate attack on a central pawn, in the present position - 4 ... c5. If White, in reply to this, exchanges pawns or plays 5 e3, then Black's problem turns out to be solved. However, White also has at his disposal another possibility - 5 d5 or a preliminary 5 Bxf6 gxf6 (exf6) and once again 6 d5, severely constraining the enemy pieces on the queen's flank. Apparantly, these considerations lead Black to thinking about the need to mechanically slow down the advance of the White king's pawn to e4.

4 ... d5?

Though this move also prevents the formation of the pawn centre, it is nevertheless a serious strategical mistake. The fact is that it is in conflict with the planned line, which Black intended with his 2nd and 3rd moves. Black's bishop on b7 becomes inactive and in general the forces of his queen's flank turn out to be cut off from the king's side. In addition to this, it allows an invasion of the enemy knight on e5, since with the move ... d5 he loses control of this square.

White now has at his disposal a concrete plan, a virtually irresistible attack on the opponent's castled position. The immediate course of the game shows how easily and freely White realises his plan.

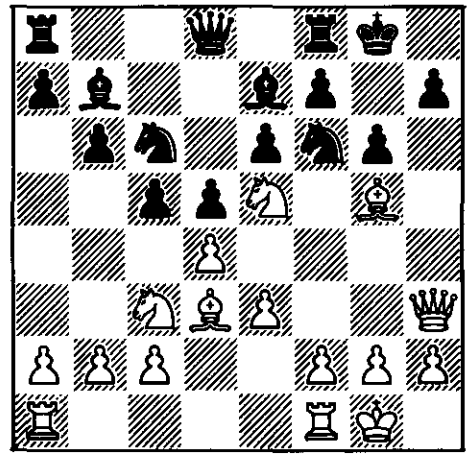
5 e3 e6 6 Ne5 Be7 7 Bb5+ c6 8 Bd3 c5 9 0-0

On 9 Bb5+ follows 9 ... Kf8 and, in view of the threat ... c4, the White bishop is in danger.

9 ... 0-0?

Straight into White's attack! He should play ... a6, in order to secure the b5 square, and then try to exchange the opponent's centralised knight by ... Nbd7 or ... Nc6. Black has not drawn up a concrete plan of defence and makes routine moves, apparently unaware of all the dangers in his position.

10 Qf3 Nc6? 11 Qh3 g6?



Near the end; furthermore a tactical oversight, admittedly in a difficult position. After the correct 11 ... Nxe5 12 dxe5 Ne4 13 Bxe4 dxe4 14 Rad1 Qe8, White has an indisputable advantage but it is still a long way for him to victory.

12 Ba6!

A witty and surprising idea, leading to the win of the exchange: 12 ... Qc8 [matters are not changed by 12 ... Bxa6 13 Nxc6 Qe8 14 Nxe7+ Qxe7 15 Qh4 Kg7 16 Bh6+] 13 Nxc6 Qxc6 14 Bxb7 Qxb7 15 Qh4 Kg7 16 Bh6+.

However, it must be emphasised that White's idea rested upon the weakening of Black's king's flank by the move ... g6, hence it is in itself quite logical. It completes, as it were, White's whole plan of attack.

Indian Defence
White: **M.Yudovich**
Black: **K.Klaman**
(15th USSR Championship 1947)

1 d4 Nf6 2 Nf3 d6

The immediate aim in this opening system is the advance ... e5, reinforced with the knight from the d7 square, the bishop from g7, and sometimes also the rook from e8.

3 Bf4 Bg4 4 e3 Nbd7 5 Be2 e6?

Black's trouble begins with this move. He surprisingly refrains from realising his plan, which would guarantee him (for example, after 5 ... Bxf3 6 Bxf3 e5 7 Bg5 c6, followed by ... Be7 and ... 0-0) a quite satisfactory position and begins to confine himself to purely "trench" warfare waiting tactics. In the meantime, White, of course, mobilises all his army, preparing a general offensive in the centre.

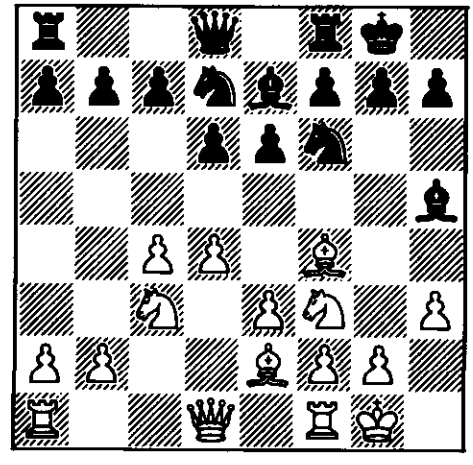
6 h3 Bh5

Even now it was necessary to go back to the indicated plan. The retreat of the bishop is absolutely pointless.

7 0-0 Be7 8 c4 0-0

Black has obtained a cramped position; one cannot see good prospects of action for the majority of his pieces - both rooks, queen, bishop on h5. But nevertheless, if henceforth he based his play on a concrete idea, it would not be easy for the opponent to realise his plan of attack.

9 Nc3



9 ... Ne8?

This retreat lacks concrete purpose and worsens even more the arrangement of Black's pieces.

Black cannot well solve the problems confronting him without the advance ... e5. His following

play must include preparation for this pawn move. Admittedly, after 9 ... Re8 10 Qd2 Bf8 11 Rad1 e5, White obtains the advantage by 12 dxe5 dxe5 13 Nxe5! Nxe5 14 Qxd8 Raxd8 15 Rxd8 Rxd8 16 Bxh5 Nxh5 17 Bxe5, but the continuation 9 ... Bxf3 10 Bxf3 e5 11 Bh2 c6 and only then ... Re8 and ... Bf8 secures Black good chances of resistance.

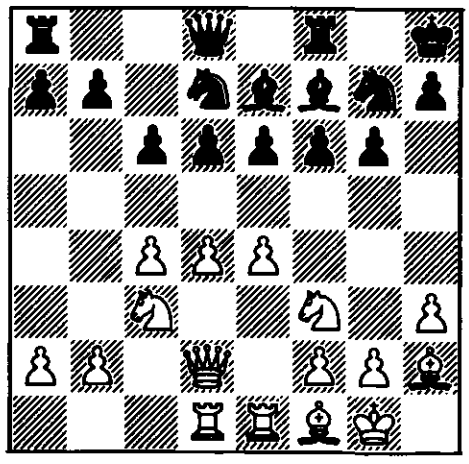
10 Qd2 f6 11 Rad1 Bf7

Was Black intending to play 11 ... e5 now? This would be a tactical mistake in view of 12 dxe5 fxe5 13 Nxe5! Bxe2 14 Nxd7 Bxf1 15 Qd5+ Kh8 16 Nxf8 Bxc4 17 Ng6+ hxg6 18 Qxc4 with a great positional advantage for White.

12 Bh2 c6 13 e4 Kh8?

Both now and on the following moves he should play ... e5. The well-fortified pawn in the centre would have allowed Black to construct a plan of defence. Instead of this, he waits passively for the opponent's attack. He is not kept waiting long.

14 Rfe1 g6? 15 Bf1 Ng7?



16 c5!

The beginning of a concrete plan, the aim of which is a pawn offensive on the queen's flank.

16 ... d5

16 ... Qc7 is bad in view of 17 e5! fxe5 18 cxd6 Qxd6 [18 ... Bxd6 leads to the loss of a piece after 19 dxe5] 19 Nxe5 Nxe5 20 Bxe5 Qd8 21 Ne4, and White obtains a strong attack in connection with the threats of Qh6 and Bc4.

17 exd5 exd5 18 b4

The White bishop on h2 rakes the whole board and, in particular, the important c7 and b8 squares on the queen's flank. With support from this bishop, the pawn offensive proves to be very threatening, the more so in that the enemy pieces, as before, are hampered in their movements.

18 ... b5

Otherwise, after b5, White opens the b-file with advantage.

19 a4

White's idea is clear and concrete - to open the a-file, occupy it with heavy pieces and invade the opponent's camp.

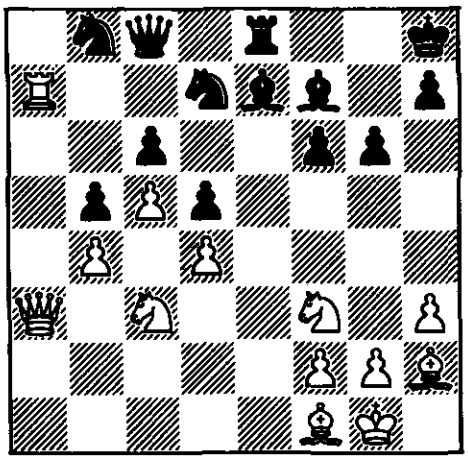
19 ... a6 20 axb5 axb5 21 Ra1 Re8 22 Ra2

A typical tactical method for occupying an open line. A prerequisite for this has been created by the fact that White controls greater space on the queen's flank.

22 ... Qc8 23 Rea1 Qb7 24 Qb2 Ne6 25 Ra3 Nc7 26 Ra5! Rxa5

White threatened to win a piece (Bxc7), therefore the exchange is forced.

27 Rxa5 Na6 28 Qa3 Nab8 29 Ra7 Qc8



The objective has been achieved. The stage approaches for realisation of the advantage.

30 Nxb5

This sacrifice is not the only way to victory. 30 Rc7 Qd8 31 Qa7 is also sufficient.

30 ... cxb5 31 Bxb5 Kg7 32 Bxb8 Nxb8 33 Bxe8 Qxe8 34 b5 Bf8 35 Qe3 Qc8 36 Qf4

White threatens both Ne5, and Ra8 and Qc7.

1:0

A just punishment for his planless play.

Queen's Gambit
White: **I.Bondarevsky**
Black: **M.Botvinnik**
(Match-tournament for absolute champion of USSR 1941)

1 d4 d5 2 Nf3 c6

Here, already on the 2nd move, begins the planning of the game. On 3 c4, Black could take the pawn and defend it later by ... b5. The move 3 Bf4 would allow Black to create pressure on the weakened b2 point, by playing ... Qb6.

3 e3

Usually one of White's tasks in the opening is to create difficulties for the opponent in the development of his pieces.

In particular, in many variations of the Queen's Gambit, Black has quite a lot of trouble deploying his forces on the queen's flank.

However, in the present game, White not only does not pretend to hamper the opponent, but also limits the activity of his own pieces on the queen's flank. This allows Black to realise a purposeful plan of play without difficulty.

White's plan is as modest as can be: he will play c4, Nc3, Be2 [or Bd3], 0-0, b3 and Bb2, and only then decide what he can extract from such an arrangement of pieces. Such a self-denial of the initiative cannot be recommended. Both 3 c4 and 3 Bf4 would have prevented Black from feeling as carefree as he does in the game.

3 ... Bg4 4 c4 e6 5 Nc3

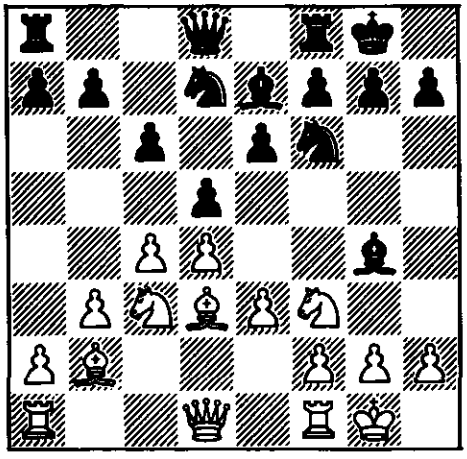
On 5 Qb3, possible is 5 ... Qb6, and it is hard for White to think of a concrete actual plan.

5 ... Nd7 6 Bd3

In three moves White retreats the bishop to e2. If he is not planning to play the move e4 [and that's the way it seems] then the bishop move must be seen as tactical carelessness.

6 ... Ngf6 7 0-0 Be7 8 b3 0-0

9 Bb2



Both sides have completed their initial arrangement of forces in accordance with the intended plans. The middlegame struggle is begun with Black's move - this undoubtedly is an achievement for him. Also telling against White is the fact that his queen's knight, in the present position, would be better deployed not on c3, but on d2. The main criticism that can be levelled against him is that, in drawing up a plan of development in the opening, he firstly does not sufficiently concretely co-ordinate it with the basic strategical plan and secondly he does not give due consideration to the tactical niceties of the opening. The moves Bd3, Nc3 were made routinely, since the objective in White's opening plan was too vague and dim, his plan turns out to be not very concrete. In this case it was difficult to decide where best to post the bishop - on e2 or d3, the knight - on c3 or d2.

9 ... e5

A plan, leading to pawn exchanges and hence to an opening of the position, which serves as an inevitable introduction to a piece skirmish, and sometimes also to a general battle; it can provoke a sharpening of the game.

Black's decision is prompted by the nature of Botvinnik's style and possibly also considerations of a sporting character.

Another concrete plan here was to play for occupation of the e4 square and the associated gain of space in the centre and on the king's flank. The starting point of this plan would be the move 9 ... Bb4 and if 10 a3, then 10 ... Bxc3 11 Bxc3 Ne4 12 Be1 f5.

10 Be2

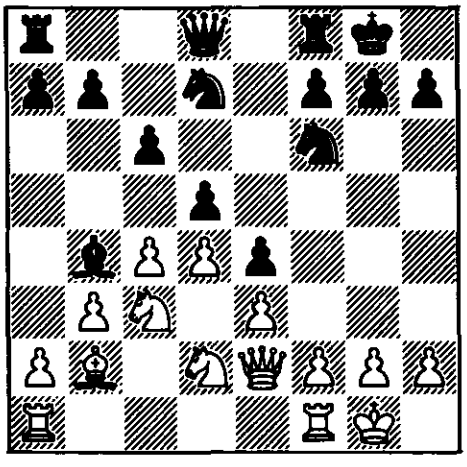
White declines to accept the challenge, but the move in the game is not only a retreat but also the beginning of a fine, very concrete plan of counterattack.

The fact is that Black has nothing better now than to advance his e-pawn to e4. The variation 10 ... exd4 11 Nxd4 provokes an exchange of the white-squared bishops and hands over to White a square of invasion for the knight on f5. After 10 ... e4, however, there arises the concrete idea of the dangerous break f3.

This is not the only plan. Also possible is a relaxing of the situation in the centre: 10 cxd5 exd4 11 exd4 Nxd5 12 Nxd5 cxd5, but in this case the pin on the knight f3 and the passive position of the bishop b2 makes a concrete plan of

play difficult. However, White did not fancy the sharp struggle produced on the way by 10 dxe5 Nxe5 11 Nxd5 (after 11 Be2 Nxf3+ 12 Bxf3 Bxf3 13 Qxf3 dxc4 14 Rad1 Qc8, Black's extra pawn on the queen's flank can imperceptibly prove to be a planned advantage the more the game is simplified) 11 ... Nxf3+ 12 gxf3 Bh3 13 Nxe7+ Qxe7 14 Kh1! (14 Re1 Ne4 15 f4 Rad8 16 Qe2 Rxd3 17 Qxd3 Qe6, and Black wins) 14 ... Bxf1 15 Qxf1, since this entails a certain amount of risk.

10 ... e4 11 Nd2 Bxe2 12 Qxe2 Bb4!



The attention of both opponents is riveted to the e4 point, for the control of which begins a decisive struggle. With his last move Black endeavours not only to exchange the knight c3, but also, by clearing the e-file, to allow his heavy pieces establish communication with this point.

13 a3?

A loss of an important tempo in the struggle for the e4 square. Admittedly, the break 13 f3 has no strength in view of 13 ... Bxc3 14 Bxc3 Re8, retaining control over the e4 square, while in the event of 15 fxe4 Nxe4 - he has created on it a good base for his pieces. However, White has at his disposal another plan consisting of a pawn attack on the king's flank, and a pawn break in the centre if Black exchanges the e4 pawn. The question is about the move 13 f4, giving Black a choice: whether to take the pawn 13 ... exf3 14 gxf3 Bxc3 15 Bxc3 Re8 16 Rae1 Nh5 17 Qg2 Qh4 with a very sharp and difficult to evaluate situation, or to take up a defensive position by 13 ... Re8 14 g4 Kh8 15 g5 Ng8 16 Qg4 Nf8 17 f5 Qd7.

13 ... Bxc3 14 Bxc3 Re8 15 f3

A consistent continuation of the plan, thought out on the 10th move. Now 15 f4 would oblige Black to play 15 ... exf3, but he should not be afraid of this. On 16 gxf3 follows 16 ... Nh5 with the threat ... Nf4 and ... Qg5+. White's e3 pawn is very weak. Therefore he needs to take on f3 with the queen, but then 16 ... Qe7 17 Rfe1 (17 Rae1 Qxa3) 17 ... Ne4 and Black has an indisputable advantage.

In reply to the move in the game, Black could also choose 15 ... exf3, which was the most energetic way of exploiting White's strategical mistake on the 13th move.

15 ... Nf8? 16 Rf2?

It was still not too late to choose

the other plan (the other objective) and leave the e4 pawn in peace. By playing 16 f4, and if 16 ... Qd7, then 17 f5, White could count on an initiative.

16 ... Qd7 17 Raf1?

Once again consistent, but ... not taking sufficient account of the opponent's counter-play. The objective which White pursues is unattainable and his plan does not prove to be concrete. More hopes were promised by the self-same move 17 f4 Qf5 18 h3 h5 19 Kh2 h4 20 Rg1 with a subsequent opening of the g-file.

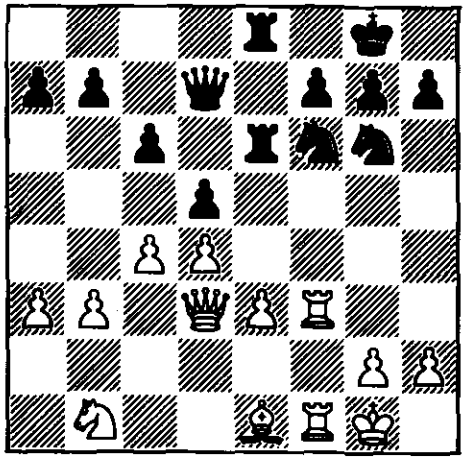
17 ... exf3

At last! Not possible now is 18 gxf3 Ng6, and if 19 Qd3, then 19 ... Qe6 winning the e3 pawn.

18 Rxf3 Re6

Black's concrete intention is triumphant. The e4 point is in his hands, the e3 pawn is weak and subject to attack on the e-file. All Black's pieces take part in the attack, whereas the enemy bishop and knight are inactive.

19 Qd3 Rae8 20 Nb1 Ng6 21 Be1?



A tactical oversight, which, just like other such mistakes, is a consequence of a strategically difficult position. However, White cannot save the game. After 21 Bd2 Ne4, unsatisfactory are both 22 Rxf7 Qxf7 23 Rxf7 Kxf7 and 22 Nc3 dxc4 23 bxc4 Nxd2 24 Qxd2 Ne5 winning two pawns.

21 ... dxc4 22 Qxc4

If 22 bxc4 Ne5 and White loses the exchange. It is possible he overlooked this fact when making his previous move.

22 ... Rxe3 23 Rxe3 Rxe3

The last period of the struggle is approaching - the realisation of the advantage which has been achieved. Black has an extra pawn and a strong position - this will be quite sufficient to quickly conclude the game.

24 Bf2 Nd5! 25 Nd2

Or 25 Bxe3 Nxe3 26 Qd3 Nxf1 27 Kxf1 Nf4 28 Qe4 Ne6 winning a second pawn.

25 ... Ngf4 26 h3 Rc3 27 Qa4 Ne2+ 28 Kh2 Rxh3+ 0:1

After 29 gxh3 Ndf4 White gets mated.

This game, like the two previous ones, is a good example of the triumph of concrete ideas over an unrealistic appraisal of a position.

3: Dynamics

A concrete idea in a plan presupposes not only a rough outline of an objective, but also the

determination of a way which leads to achieving it.

The objective in the course of some segment of the game, sometimes quite significant, remains invariable. It embodies, as it were, the element of statics in the struggle. However, the way in which one is directed towards the objective represents the element of dynamics in the plan, guided by concrete ideas.

The outward reflection of the dynamic process in the game consists of frequent and structurally significant changes in the position. The inward side of the dynamic process manifests itself in a series of creative ideas, realised against a background of a single planned concrete idea.

Games sated with a great number of tactical ideas and characterised precisely because of this circumstance by frequent and qualitatively significant changes of the types of position, are particularly dynamic. On the other hand, games where the types of position change, but not seriously, can be called not very dynamic, in which the sharpness of the struggle tapers off and the excitement of chess thinking is poorly expressed.

Admittedly, strictly speaking, to one or the other extent dynamics are inherent in the process of nearly every game. If they vanish, then the process of the struggle because static, creatively dull, and at times even totally dies away. Not without good reason do the rules of play provide for a game to be called a draw in the event of a threefold repetition of position or the absence of captures and change in the position of the pawns in the course of 50 moves.

The dynamics of play are closely linked with concrete thinking, just as at the same time concrete thinking to a large extent is determined by its dynamic content. For this very reason the play of Chigorin, Lasker, Pillsbury, Alekhine was distinguished by strongly pronounced dynamic content. This applies to the majority of Soviet grandmasters and masters. But in both chess history and our day can be seen chessplayers who prefer a slow development of events and are notable for their unnecessary caution.

Sometimes, in the thinking of one and the same chessplayer, a serious metamorphosis takes place.

An interesting and instructive example in this respect is the fate of Nimzovich.

In the first period of his creative work, his fiery temperament, dynamic thoughts, splendid and original imagination, earned him deserved fame as an artist of chess. While Nimzovich was just such an artist, his sporting and creative path was crowned with a series of brilliant achievements and he gained a reputation for himself as an important innovator, for ever searching, for ever daring.

However, from a certain moment Nimzovich had too high an opinion of himself as a chess philosopher, a bearer of chess truth, a herald of chess justice. Coming out against the conservative views of Tarrasch, particularly on the question of the centre, Nimzovich unwittingly slipped into the position of a conservative. Out of the definite, conventional methods of chess struggle amongst masters, he created the theory of restraint, blockade, overprotection, broadcasting it widely and rather like a self-advertisement as "My System", hindering the development of the opponent's forces, blockading his pawn chain, centralising of pieces, preparing to replace a pawn outpost with a piece [overprotection] - all these "principles" had to be guiding threads for the chessplayer's thoughts and served as absolute guarantees of victory. By elevating these "principles" in this way to the rank of dogma (as Tarrasch had done in his time, to maintain sporting form, corresponding to one's talent), Nimzovich came to suffer telling defeats when encountering opponents renowned for great dynamicity of thought, particularly Alekhine. Not long before his death, Nimzovich lost a match with Stahlberg, though he undoubtedly was superior to him in strength and in knowledge and experience. The reason for Nimzovich's defeat cannot but be seen as the dogmatic touch which distinguished his thought in the match.

Dynamic planning - this is not waiting, not restraint, not blockading, but foresight and preparation of a decisive course of events.

Morphy, in describing the play of Staunton, the famous English chessplayer of the 19th century, saw his shortcomings in an inability to foresee the course of events. Interpreting Morphy's thoughts, one can say that he reproached Staunton for his insufficiently dynamic play.

The struggle for the dynamic realisation of a plan consists of looking for the shortest way and the most energetic means of achieving the objective.

The practical material which we will look at in the following pages represents good examples of dynamic purposefulness of thought.

Queen's Gambit
White: **A.Alekhine**
Black: **E.Bogolyubov**
(Budapest 1921)
1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 e6 3 Nf3 Bb4+

Besides this plan, at the basis of which lies the desire to play the Queen's Gambit without the black squared bishops, Black has available at least two dynamic plans of play. The first - by means of 3 ... b6 followed by ... Bb7 to begin a struggle for control of the e4 square, the second - to immediately cut the opening knot with the move ... d5.

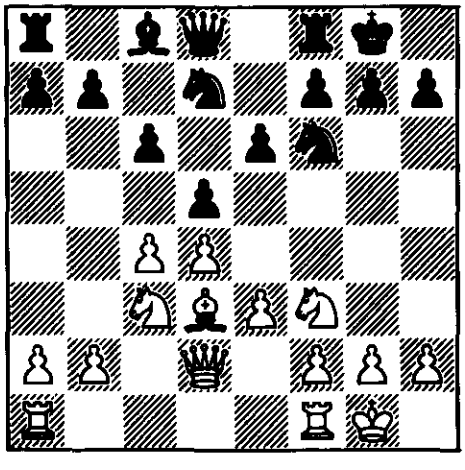
4 Bd2 Bxd2+ 5 Qxd2 0-0 6 Nc3 d5

Necessary; Black must not allow the move e4. However the aim of the move is not only prophylactic. It is an important link in Black's set-up, which enables him, after ... Nbd7, ... b6, ... Bb7, and ... c5, to obtain promising play in the centre.

7 e3 Nbd7 8 Bd3 c6

Played in consideration of White's following move. Nevertheless, preferable was 8 ... b6 and 8 ... Bb7, controlling the e4 point and obtaining excellent chances in the centre by ... c5 (or ... Ne4). On the other hand, an immediate 8 ... c5 makes it easier for White to plan his game. After 8 ... c5 9 cxd5 Nxd5 10 Nxd5 exd5 11 dxc5 Nxc5 12 0-0, the real weakness of the d5 pawn and the presence of a piece base in the centre - the d4 square, gives him a premise for seizing the initiative.

9 0-0



White overlooks the tactical possibility, which arises after this move, for the opponent to complete the development of his queen's flank. However, he should not be severely criticised for this, since after 9 Rd1 Re8, threatening ... e5, Black creates prospects of freeing himself.

9 ... dxc4 10 Bxc4 e5

Black's witty plan is revealed in the variation 11 dxe5 Nxe5 12 Qxd8 Nxf3+ 13 gxf3 Rxd8 with a free, probably even better game. Nevertheless the operation he undertakes also has a shady side in that the enemy bishop's activity is increased and the f7 pawn weakened. The latter circumstance for the time being rivets the Black rook to the f8 square, to avoid the attack by Ng5.

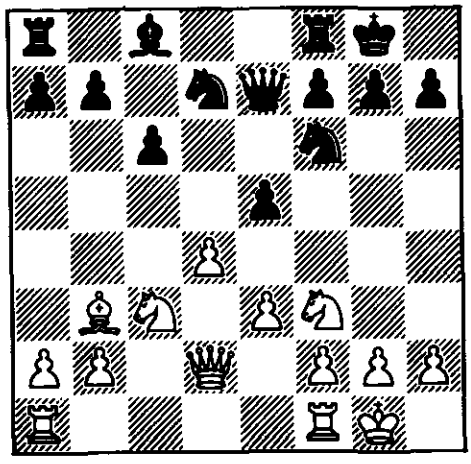
It should be mentioned that, with his last move, Black creates a relative threat consisting of 11 ... e4 12 Ng5 Nb6 13 Bb3 Bf5 14 f3 exf3 15 Rxf3 Bg6 and, if 16 e4, then 16 ... h6. Though even in this case White's position is rather more favourable, by developing his forces Black has a chance of putting up serious resistance against the opponent's pressure.

11 Bb3!

With this fine retreat, White sets the opponent a difficult task. Now 11 ... e4 leads to the loss of a pawn after 12 Ng5 Qe7 13 Bc2. The continuation 11 ... exd4 12 Qxd4 [good enough are also 12 Nxd4 and 12 exd4] allows White to maintain a dominating position in the centre and a considerable superiority in development.

White had at his disposal an interesting bishop sacrifice 11 Bxf7+ but, as indicated by Alekhine, this would allow Black to achieve a draw (11 ... Rxf7 12 dxe5 Ng4 13 e6 Rxf3 14 exd7 Bxd7 15 gxf3 Nxh2 16 Kxh2 Qh4+).

11 ... Qe7



A very natural move, which on the face of it opens up concrete planning prospects for Black. Indeed, it renews the threat of the advance ... e4, to untie the queen's knight, frees the d8 square for the rook, and prepares the manoeuvre ... Nc5 after ... exd4. And yet Black's continuation is unsatisfactory, mainly because he does not foresee the counter-action to his idea; he comprehends the static position not the dynamic.

The very first worry for Black must be the freeing of his rook from the defence of the f7 point. The move 11 ... h6 serves this purpose, since it covers the g5 square from invasion by the White knight and resumes the threat of ... e4. On 12 e4 possible is 12 ... Qa5 13 Rad1 Re8 with a firm position and prospects of counter-attack in the centre.

12 e4!

A highly dynamic plan, at the basis of which lies the joint advance of the e and f pawns. The purposeful carrying out of a similar plan secured White victory in the 12th and 16th games of the first Botvinnik-Smyslov match (1954). We advise our readers to study these games on their own, comparing the idea realised in them by Botvinnik with Alekhine's plan in the present game.

12 ... exd4?

Without looking very far into the future, Black decides to develop his queen's flank at any price.

He achieves this objective but at what cost? He himself clears the way for the e4 pawn, concedes the d-file to the opponent and as a result is subjected to a dangerous attack. White, with utmost dynamism, brilliantly exploits this strategical mistake.

It was still possible to defend himself on the basis of a plan which counters the pressure on the e-file: 12 ... h6 13 Rad1 Re8 14 Bc2 exd4 15 Nxd4 Ne5 16 f4 Nc4 with a lively struggle.

13 Nxd4 Nc5

The e4 pawn clearly cannot be taken.

14 Bc2 Rd8 15 Rad1

With the obvious threat of Nxc6.

15 ... Bg4 16 f3 Ne6 17 Qf2

Nxd4 18 Rxd4 Be6 19 Rfd1

White's concrete idea triumphs completely and this is promoted a great deal further ... by the opponent. This does not diminish in the least the outstanding mastery demonstrated by Alekhine. If we return to his play, beginning with the 11th move, then it is striking how purposefully he directs the course of events to his advantage. Only four moves ago White's rooks were on a1 and f1, whereas now they already decide the outcome of the clash on the d-file: however the move 12 e4! serves as a starting point for a pawn offensive, which will be carried out with enviable energy and dynamism. Throughout the entire game White does not make a single move wide of the mark and does not lose a single second without good reason.

19 ... b6

Operations on the queen's flank, where Black has a pawn majority, are pointless in the present situation and only lead to new vulnerable points in his position. However, this merely accelerates his downfall, which sooner or later is inevitable.

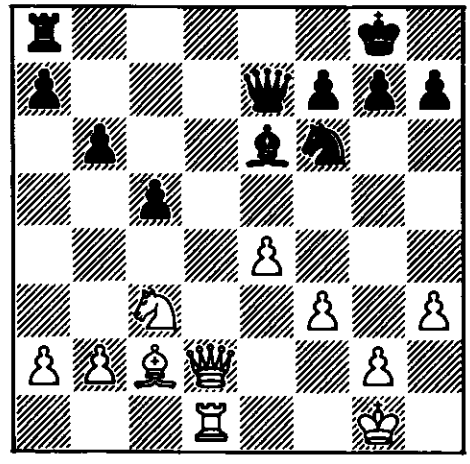
20 h3

So that after f4 Black will not have the thrust ... Ng4.

20 ... c5 21 R4d2 Rxd2 22 Qxd2 *(see next diagram)*

22 ... c4

Black's position is becoming more and more difficult (for example, 22 ... Bd7 is not possible



because of 23 Nd5), but he should try to confuse the struggle by 22 ... Ne8 23 f4 f6 24 Nd5 Qb7 25 Bb3 Kh8.

23 f4 g6

In the event of 23 ... Qc5+ 24 Qd4 Qxd4+ 25 Rxd4, Black, without improving his position, loses at least the pawn on c4.

24 Qd4 Rc8 25 g4 Bxg4 26 hxg4 Nxg4 27 Kg2 h5 28 Nd5 Qh4 29 Rh1 Qd8 30 Bd1 1:0

Queen's Gambit

White: **A.Alekhine**

Black: **G.Maroczy**

(Bled 1931)

1 d4 d5 2 Nf3 Nf6 3 c4 e6 4 Bg5 Nbd7

Black joins the classical rails of the Orthodox Variation, in which the mutual development of forces usually proceeds at a slow tempo and Black, for a comparatively long time, has to reconcile himself to the role of the defending side.

Black's position is characterised

by the absence of pawn weaknesses and with significant defensive resources is so solid that White has to expend a great deal of effort in preparation, before starting on his attack.

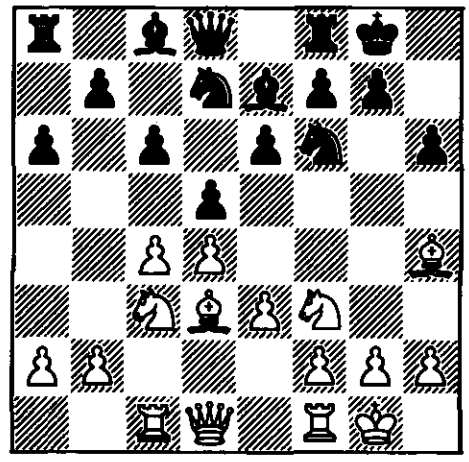
Instead of the careful (orthodox) method of play, Black has at his disposal another, sharper plan. At the basis of it lies the endeavour to force White to exchange Bxf6 and then to begin to energetically play for the clearing of the centre and opening of space for action by his bishops.

Black begins the tactical realisation of this plan with the move 4 ... h6. The retreat of the bishop to c1 is inconsistent, to h4 - leads to the loss of a pawn after 5 ... Bb4+ 6 Nc3 dxc4 7 e3 b5, while in the event of 5 Bxf6 follows 5 ... Bb4+ 6 Nc3 Qxf6 7 Qb3 Nc6, intending to meet 8 cxd5 with 8 ... Nxd4. White's king's flank is undeveloped and this allows Black already in the early stages of the opening to contend for the initiative.

5 e3 h6 6 Bh4 Be7 7 Nc3 0-0 8 Rc1 c6 9 Bd3 a6

This seemingly modest pawn move prepares the development of the forces on the queen's flank by means of ... dxc4, ... b5, ... Bb7 and ... c5. To prevent it, White sometimes exchanges cxd5, but this opens up new planning possibilities for the opponent, in connection with the opening of the e-file and the c8-h3 diagonal.

10 0-0



The opening can be considered over, but, as usual in the Orthodox variation of the Queen's Gambit, Black still has to solve the problem of developing the queen's flank, whereas White has already achieved a full and harmonious development of all his forces.

10 ... dxc4 11 Bxc4 c5

Here, more prospects of a plan were offered by 11 ... b5 12 Bd3 Bb7, and White cannot prevent the move ... c5, attacking the centre and opening a fighting diagonal for the Black queen's bishop. If, however, on 12 ... Bb7, White replies 13 Ne4, then he risks losing a pawn after 13 ... Nxe4 14 Bxe7 Nxf2. 13 e4 also leads to the same result in view of 13 ... Nxe4 14 Bxe7 Nxc3.

12 a4

This move prevents the above-mentioned plan of development of Black's queen's flank, but also has a shady side as it weakens his own queen's flank and allows the formation of a central isolated pawn on d4. In the next stage of the struggle Maroczy sets his opponent a rather

difficult task and only by his splendid feeling for the position does Alekhine succeed in achieving stormy and at the same time not unfavourable complications.

12 ... Qa5 13 Qe2 cxd4 14 exd4 Nb6

Black's plan is concrete and dynamic. Piece after piece of his enters into play. He strives for an arrangement of his forces - rooks c8 and d8, bishop e8, upon which he can develop a successful attack on the centre.

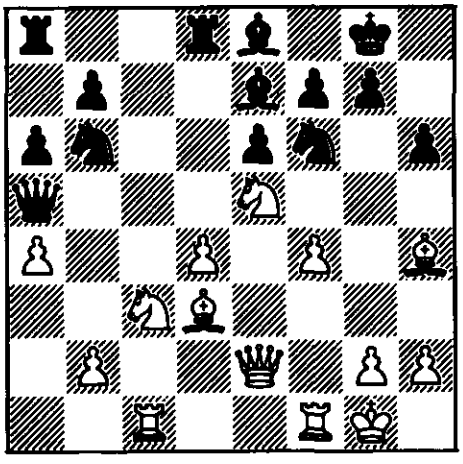
15 Bd3!

White is also equal to the occasion. The object of his attack, in which all the minor pieces and the queen participate, is the enemy king. The variation 15 ... Nxa4? 16 Ne4 Nd5 17 Bxe7 Nxe7 18 Ne5, and if 18 ... Nf5 then 19 Qg4 Nxd4 20 Nf6+ Kh8 21 Qg6! bears witness to the dangers of this attack.

15 ... Bd7 16 Ne5

Threatening a direct attack on the h7 point - 17 Bxf6 and 18 Qe4.

16 ... Rfd8 17 f4 Be8



The struggle for the initiative enters a decisive phase. Black begins an attack on the centre. Now ... Rxd4 is threatened and White's queen's flank is also weak.

18 Ng4!

Defending the d4 pawn would hand over the initiative to the opponent, while White would be forced to switch from attack to defence, which could be fraught with serious consequences in view of the weaknesses which have arisen in his camp. In his plan, Alekhine anticipated the need to sacrifice a pawn. With this example we come across the problem of risk in the chess struggle. Alekhine, of course, could not foresee all the ramifications of his planned attack and takes a risk by giving up the central pawn to his menacing opponent. Risk in the planning of the game - this is a major, hitherto little investigated question, which deserves special examination.

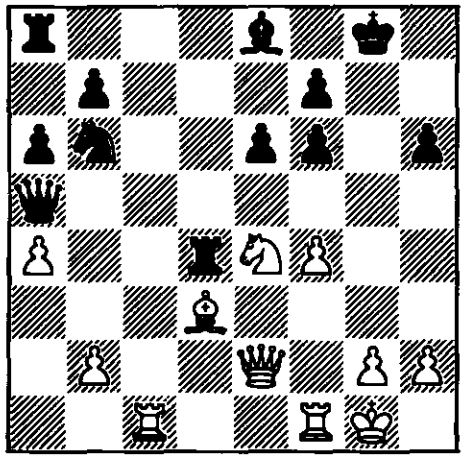
18 ... Rxd4

Black accepts the challenge. This decision was not obligatory. It was possible to continue the planned line, if only by playing 18 ... Nbd5, with the aim of strengthening the defence of the king's flank and postponing until a later time the exploitation of White's chronic weaknesses in the centre and on the queen's flank. In this case, on 19 Nxd5, possible is 19 ... Qxd5 20 Nxf6+ Bxf6 21 Bxf6 gxf6 and there is no decisive continuation for White, while his weak-

nesses (for example, the d4 pawn) begin to make themselves even more strongly felt.

However, it was too tempting for Black to reap the fruits of his dynamic play.

19 Bxf6 Bxf6 20 Nxf6+ gxf6 21 Ne4



21 ... Rad8?

All in the same spirit of exploiting, as energetically as possible, the advantage achieved. This under-estimation of the opponent's threats on the king's flank costs him very dear. Meanwhile after 21 ... f5 the doubled rooks on the d-file only gain in strength, while White's attack runs up against a strong barrier - 22 Nf6+ Kg7 23 Nh5+ Kf8. Alekhine pointed out that he would have recourse to the move 24 b3, but after 24 ... Bc6, with the threat ... Qd5, Black achieves not only a material, but also a positional advantage.

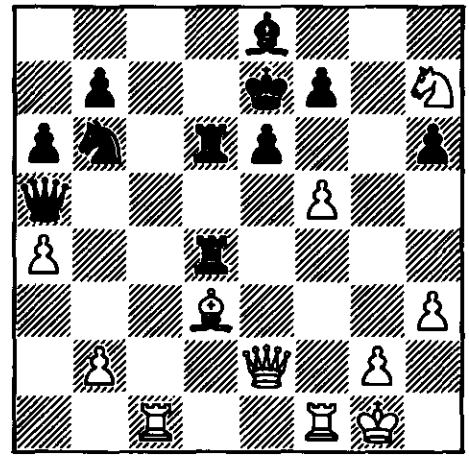
22 Nxf6+ Kf8 23 Nh7+!

A surprising and very unpleasant check, if only confirmed by this variation: 23 ... Kg7 24 Qg4+ Kh8 25 Qh4 Qe5! 26 Qxh6 (not 26 Nf6? Qg5! and not 26 Qxd8? Qe3+) 26 ... Qg7 27 Qh4 Kg8, and White is guaranteed a draw at least: 28 Nf6+ Kf8 29 Nh7+. Judging by the future course of events, it was necessary for Black to be satisfied with this result.

23 ... Ke7 24 f5!

Such is the dynamic play of Alekhine. This move, undoubtedly seen beforehand, creates new threats and indirectly defends the bishop, since on 24 ... Rxd3 follows 25 f6+ and then Qxd3+.

24 ... R8d6



Black renews the threat of ... Rxd3 and opens a refuge for the king on d8, but he does not foresee the tactical blow of his inventive opponent. However, it is already difficult to repulse White's attack. On 24 ... e5 follows 25 Bb5, while on 24 ... Qd5 - 25 fxe6 fxe6 26 Qf2 Rxd3 27 Qf8+ and 28 Nf6 mate.

25 b4!

To deliver the decisive blow, White must introduce the queen into the attack. The thrust Qh5 is parried by the reply ... Qd2. The other way of invading with the

White queen into the enemy camp is via the e5 square, which is guarded by the queen. The text move opens one of these arteries; in the event of 25 ... Rxb4 the Black queen is cut off from the d2 square, whereas on 25 ... Qxb4 it is driven off the fifth rank.

25 ... Qxb4

If 25 ... Rxb4, then 26 Qh5 e5 27 f6+ Kd8 28 Bb5 axb5 29 Qxe5 with a quick denouement.

26 Qe5

With the threat of Qf6+ and Nf8 mate.

26 ... Nd7 27 Qh8

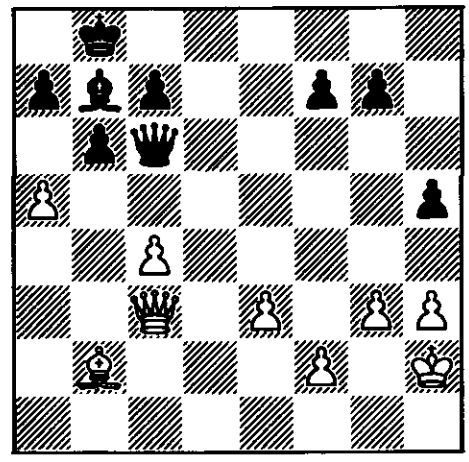
But this threat of a beautiful mate in three moves (28 f6+ Kd8 29 Qxe8+ Kxe8 30 Rc8+), Black overlooks.

27 ... Rxd3 28 f6+ 1:0

4: Harmony

One of the principles of planning the game, besides the concrete and the dynamic, is also the harmonious activity of the forces in the process of the chess game. Upon this, the question, of course, is not about the mechanical interaction of the pieces, but about their combined activity within the bounds of a single plan. It is therefore important that the harmonious activity of the forces is purposeful, that is directed towards the realisation of a real plan of play, arising from the concrete features of the position.

To explain our thoughts let us look at the following simple position.



Both sides' bishops and queens operate harmoniously, but if, for Black, this harmony, having as its object the position of the enemy king, is to a large extent effective, then for White, on the other hand, despite the absolutely identical set-up, it is wide of the mark.

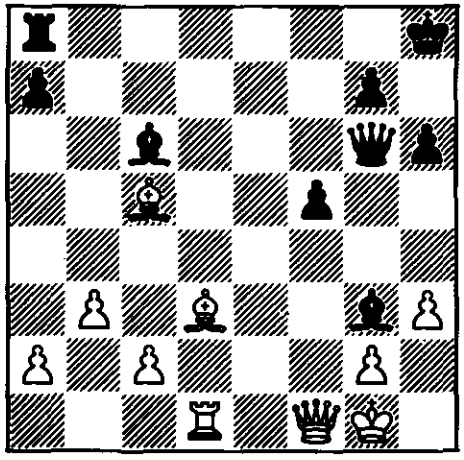
The conclusion is clear: harmony in operations of forces is not a self-contained factor, but subordinate to a general plan of play. Harmonious operation of forces within the bounds of a real plan - this is the sort of operation where each piece supplements the other pieces and is necessary for achievement of the set aim.

We meet a type of harmony of forces in almost every game. Doubled rooks on the file, sometimes concentration of all three heavy pieces on open lines, attack of an intended object with several pieces and pawns, doubling on the diagonal, joint operation of the rooks on the seventh or eighth

ranks (rook "storm"!) and many other co-ordinated operations of pieces can serve as a vivid illustration of purposeful harmony.

The setting up of harmonious operations depends on the planned task. Thus, when doubling on the diagonal, it will sometimes be more favourable to place the queen in front (as in the example just looked at), though at times one should prefer the arrangement of the queen behind the bishop. The same is true also in respect of the operation of the rook and queen on an open file.

Thus it is the character of the position, the planned objective, the concrete deepening of dynamics in the position, that will determine not only the direction of the harmonious operation of the pieces, but also a constructive form of harmony. Hence it follows that harmony in operations of forces depends both on a real plan and on the features of the position under review in a dynamic struggle. From this point of view we look at three endings.



This position arose in the game **Starchenkov-Romanovsky** played in Leningrad in 1929.

Black's queen and bishop exert harmonious pressure on the g2 point; the setting up of a queen-bishop "battery" on the h2-b8 diagonal, for example after ... Bc7 and ... Qg3, is also threatened.

32 ... Bf4!

The threats begin to materialise. Clouds are gathering over the position of the White king.

33 Qf2 Re8

Black prefers a further concentration of fire on the g2 square and now threatens to play ... Re3! To prevent this, White has to reply 34 Bf1. Instead of this he makes a presumptuous move, after which the harmonious attack on the diagonal by the Black pieces becomes irresistible.

34 g4? Bb7 35 Bb5

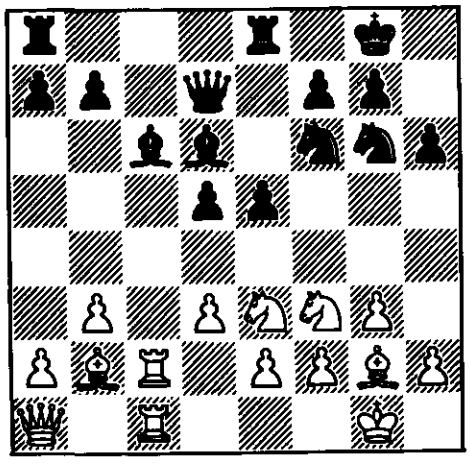
The only defence against ... Qc6, but it also proves to be insufficient.

35 ... fxg4 36 Bxe8 Qe4 0:1

In view of the variation 37 Kf1 Qh1+ 38 Qg1 (38 Ke2 Bf3+ 39 Kd3 Qxd1+ 40 Kc3 gxh3) 38 ... Qf3+ 39 Ke1 Qc3+ 40 Kf1 Ba6+.

In this game, White not only sins against the principle of harmony, but also disregards one of the most important derivatives of this principle - economy of forces. For the defence of the g2 square he uses the joint efforts of the king and queen, whereas the bishop could have been substituted for the

queen without detriment.



Also in this example (**Reti-Yates**, New York 1924) one is immediately struck by the harmonious operation of all White's pieces, the blows of which, in accordance with the plan, are aimed at the centre. Admittedly, Black has concentrated considerable forces on the defence of it, but nevertheless the e5 point is vulnerable in his position; a serious role is also played by the fact that he has no counter to the joint pressure of the enemy rooks on the c-file.

17 d4! e4

A forced reply, opening the way of invasion for White to the e5 point, which is attacked by him four times and defended with only three enemy pieces. Worse is 17 ... Qe7, in view of 18 dxe5 Nxe5 19 Nd4 g6 20 Nxc6 bxc6 21 Rxc6 Nxc6 22 Bxf6 with a decisive advantage.

18 Ne5

The possibility of this invasion is evoked by the fact that the White bishop on b2 is placed in front of the queen. If the pieces were the other way round, the move 18 Ne5 would not be possible.

18 ... Bxe5 19 dxe5 Nh7

Once again, the only move; 19 ... Ng4 is not good because of 20 Bh3 h5 21 f3.

20 f4 exf3

Otherwise f5.

21 exf3 Ng5 22 f4 Nh3+ 23 Kh1

The Black pieces operate without coordination and are powerless to resist the opponent's offensive.

23 ... d4 24 Bxd4 Rad8 25 Rxc6

Here also the attack on the c6 point plays its role.

25 ... bxc6 26 Bxc6 Nf2+

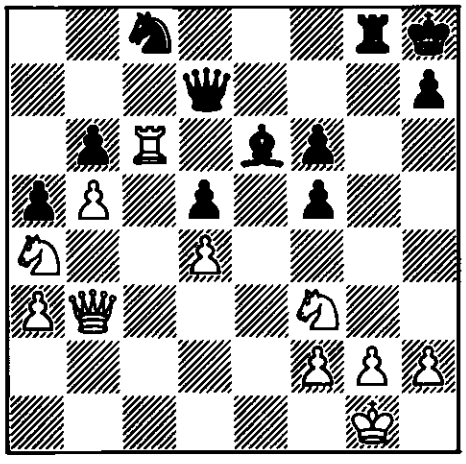
There were also no hopes at all left of saving the game after 26 ... Qxd4 27 Qxd4 Rxd4 28 Bxe8.

27 Kg2 Qxd4 28 Qxd4 Rxd4 29 Bxe8 Ne4 30 e6 Rd2+ 31 Kf3 1:0

In this ending we notice that all seven of White's pieces took part in the achievement of victory, since every piece (including also the rook c1, without making a single move) performed necessary and at the same sufficient "work". Not one of White's fighting units used up more effort than was intended for it, hence they maintained proper economy of strength - a circumstance which plays quite an important role in the complicated process of the middlegame.

The third ending provides us with an illustration of the rarely

asked and difficult question as to whether, and to what extent, material loss (for example, loss of a pawn) upsets the harmony in the operation of the opponent's pieces. Here is what happened when, in the following position, taken from the game **Suetin-Antoshin** (½-final, 22nd USSR Championship 1954). White willingly disconnects his forces in pursuit of material "goods".

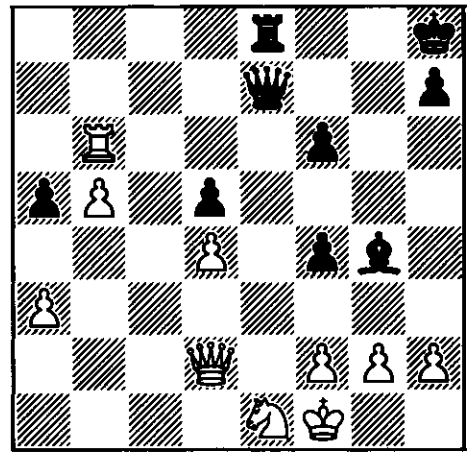


White has an advantage which is sufficient for victory. However, instead of the correct 27 Qe3, he is tempted by the win of a pawn - **27 Nxb6**, after which his rook loses touch with the other pieces. As a result, Black, with few forces and wonderful harmony, conducts a decisive mating attack. From the standpoint of the finale, the game is an instructive rarity.

27 ... Nxb6 28 Rxb6 f4 29 Ne1

Best was to introduce the rook into the defence by means of 29 Rc6. The combination 29 ... Rxg2+ 30 Kxg2 Bh3+ 31 Kh1 Qg4 is repulsed by the moves Ne1 or Nh4.

29 ... Bh3 30 Qf3 Qe7 31 Kf1 Bg4 32 Qd3 Re8 33 Qd2



33 ... f3!

The pawn is included in the general "concert"! 34 ... Qxe1+! 35 Qxe1 fxg2+ is threatened.

34 Nxf3 Qxa3 35 Qd1

White's position is indefensible. On 35 Rc6 decisive is 35 ... Bxf3 36 gxf3 Qxf3 37 Kg1 Rg8+ 38 Kf1 Qh3+ 39 Ke2 Re8+ 40 Kd1 Qf1+ 41 Kc2 Re2 42 Rc8+ Kg7 43 Rc7+ Kg6. The best defence must be considered 35 Ne1, giving up the queen for rook and bishop after 35 ... Be2+, but after 36 Qxe2 Rxe2 37 Kxe2 Qe7+! 38 Kf1 Qb4, White cannot prolong his resistance for long.

35 ... Qb2 36 Rxf6

White overlooks the threat, but he cannot cope with the advance of the a-pawn.

36 ... Rc8 37 h3 Rc1 38 Qxc1 Qxc1+ 39 Ke2 Bd7 40 Rf8+ Kg7 41 Rb8 Bxb5+ 0:1

The final position, portraying the harmonious operation of the Black bishop and queen, is just as beautiful and instructive as the

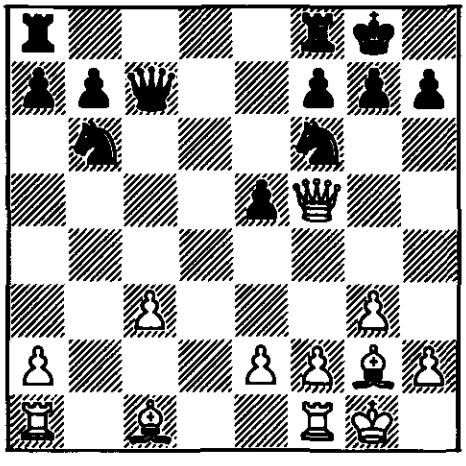
whole of the attack begun on the 28th move.

One of the characteristic traits of Alekhine's style was a striving to disorganise the opponent's forces, preventing them from operating harmoniously. A bright example of such tactics is the following game.

Catalan Opening
White: **A.Alekhine**
Black: **M.Euwe**
(14th game, return match 1937)
1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 e6 3 g3 d5 4 Nf3 dxc4 5 Qa4+ Nbd7 6 Qxc4 c5 7 Bg2 Nb6 8 Qd3 cxd4 9 0-0 Be7 10 Nxd4 0-0 11 Nc3 e5 12 Nf5 Bb4 13 Qc2 Bxc3 14 bxc3 Bxf5

In the event of an immediate 14 ... Qc7 White obtains excellent prospects by continuing 15 Rd1 and then Bg5. All the same Black would have to take the knight.

15 Qxf5 Qc7



The development of the pieces is completed, both White and Black have arranged their pieces harmoniously. The question is to what extent will this harmony attend the realisation of the following plan.

16 Bh6

Threatening to capture the pawn on g7. On 16 Bg5 Black could reply ... Nfd7 and then ... f6, consolidating his position in the centre. Now, however, on 16 ... Nfd7, follows 17 Qg5 winning the exchange.

16 ... Nbd7 17 Qg5

Alekhine himself gave this move a question mark, confessing that the right continuation was 17 Be3. One can hardly agree with this opinion. Black replies 17 ... Rac8, and then ... b6 with good play on the c-file.

Meanwhile, with his last move, White achieves a great deal: he disconnects the enemy rooks, one of which is temporarily locked up in a "cage", he thrusts back Black's active knight deep in the rear, he frees the centre from the influence of this piece, finally he weakens the position of the knight d7.

The very fact that in one or two moves his bishop proves to be locked in (which is the reason why Alekhine condemned the queen move) is of far less significance than the above-mentioned considerations about the breaking of communications between the Black pieces.

17 ... Ne8 18 Rab1

Even more energetic was 18 Rfd1, threatening to free the bishop by means of Qf5. If, for example, 18 ... Rd8, then 19 Bh3

f5 20 Bxf5 Rxf5 (20 ... Ndf6 21 Rxd8 Qxd8 22 Qd2) 21 Qxf5 gxh6 22 Qe6+ Kh8 23 Qe7 and the chances are obviously on White's side. Likewise 18 ... Nb6 (instead of ... Rd8) comes up against an interesting refutation: 19 a4! a5 20 Qf5 gxh6 21 Be4 f6 22 Rab1 threatening Rxb6, while, in the event of a move of the knight, the rook invades on d7.

18 ... Nc5

Now White has no trouble escaping with his bishop from the danger zone, but also upon the better 18 ... Nb6 19 a4 f6 20 Qh4! gxh6 21 a5, White's game is preferable.

19 Qg4 Rad8 20 Bg5 Rd6

The lack of harmony in the operation of the rooks is a serious minus in Black's position. It is not difficult to see that the opponent's 17th move is "to blame" for this.

21 Qc4 b6 22 f4

But this idea of attack comes up against a witty refutation. By playing 22 Rfd1, White maintains a clear advantage, having to all intents and purposes an advantage in battle units of a whole rook.

22 ... Rg6

A very fine reply, which not only holds back the raid of the White f-pawn, but also prepares ... Nd6, liberating the imprisoned rook.

23 Rbd1

This move, creating the threat of Bd8, turns out to be unsatisfactory. The position has become double-edged, and therefore White should continue 23 Qd5 (with the same threat Bd8) so as, in the event of 23 ... Rd6, to return with the queen to c4, and on 23 ... Nd6 to reply 24 fxe5.

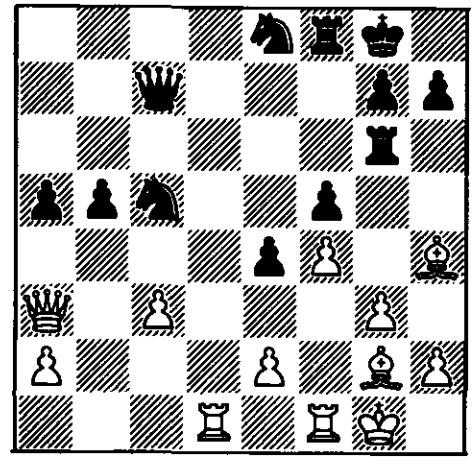
23 ... e4?

An inaccuracy in return, after which Alekhine's previous move, objectively unsatisfactory, becomes very strong. Meanwhile, by playing 23 ... Nd6 24 Qd5 Nf5 25 Kf2 Re8 26 Bd8 Qb8 27 fxe5 Rge6! (27 ... Rxe5? 28 Bc7!), Black obtains a counterattack.

24 Bh4 b5

Reckoning, after 24 Qxb5 Nd6 and then ... Nf5, to complicate the situation on the king's flank by exploiting the poor position of the enemy rooks. White refuses this "gift".

25 Qb4 a5 26 Qa3 f5



If 26 ... Nd6, then 27 Rd5. On 26 ... Rd6, the combination 27 Be7! Rxd1 28 Bxc5 is decisive. All Black's trials and tribulations spring from the extremely unharmonious position of the rook on f8.

27 Bd8!

Apropos this move Alekhine noted "In this way, White prevents the harmonious coordination of the Black pieces."

27 ... Qa7 28 Kh1 Ra6 29 Rd5 Ne6 30 Rfd1 Nxd8 31 Rxd8 Qf7 32 R1d5 Rc6 33 Rxb5

Now this pawn can be taken!

33 ... Qc4 34 Rxf5!

A combination based on the joint operations of all White's forces. If now 34 ... Rxf5 35 Rxe8+ Kf7 36 Qe7+ Kg6 37 Bxe4 Rf6 38 g4.

34 ... Rcf6 35 Rxf6 gxf6 36 Rd4

Of course, 36 Qb3 decides the game more simply and quickly, but Alekhine "pleads" time-trouble.

36 ... Qxe2 37 Qb3+ Kh8 38 Rxe4 Qd2 39 Qb1 Qxc3 40 Qe1 Qxe1+ 41 Rxe1

It has come down to an endgame in which White, thanks to his extra pawn and better placed pieces and pawns, achieved victory without difficulty on the 52nd move. The Black rook f8 remained 32 moves without moving!

Philidor Defence

White: **S.Gothilf**

Black: **P.Romanovsky**

(4th match game 1923)

1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 d6 3 d4 Nf6 4 Nc3 Nbd7 5 Bc4 Be7 6 0-0

The attempt here to solve the problem of this opening variation with a forcing continuation proves to be a failure: 6 Bxf7+ Kxf7 7 Ng5+ Kg8 8 Ne6 Qe8 9 Nxc7 Qg6 10 Nxa8 Qxg2 11 Rf1 exd4.

Black threatens a powerful harmonious attack with the four minor pieces and the queen after ... Ne5, against which it is very difficult to find a sufficient defence. The fact of the matter is that White's rooks on f1 and a1 do not act in concert and cannot support one another, the knight on a8 is likewise cut off from the rest of the forces. If now 12 Qxd4, then 12 ... Ne5 13 f4 Nfg4, and the threat ... Bh4+ proves to be deadly. There is also another beautiful solution: 13 ... Nf3+ 14 Rxf3 Qxf3 15 Qc4+ d5 16 Qxc8+ Kf7 17 Qxh8 Nxe4 18 Nxe4 Qxe4+ 19 Kd1 Qf3+ with mate in a few moves.

6 ... 0-0 7 Be3

With this move, White completes the mobilisation of his forces, the arrangement of which looks quite harmonious. And yet we cannot approve of this bishop move. You see, White's task (as indeed also Black's) is not simply to develop his pieces harmoniously, but also, together with this, to pursue a definite planned objective. With this criterion, the move 7 Be3, aiming only at a passive defence of the centre, is not satisfactory. A purposeful form of activity would be an energetic attack on the centre by means of 7 Bg5 and then Qe2 and Rad1.

7 ... c6 8 Bb3

The advance of the Black pawns

on the queen's flank is linked to a plan of attack on the centre, in particular the e4 pawn. Therefore it would have been more circumspect to prevent this advance with the move a4.

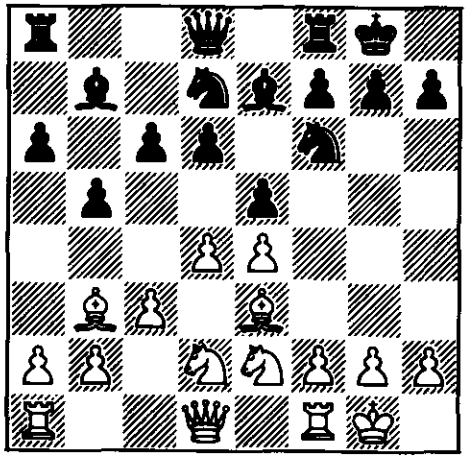
8 ... b5 9 Nd2 a6 10 Ne2

The continuation 10 f4 exd4 11 Bxd4 c5 12 Bxf6 Nxf6 13 Bd5 Bg4 14 Qe1 b4 15 Ne2 Nxd5 16 exd5 Bf6 leads to an obvious advantage for Black, in view of the threats of ... Bxb2 and ... Re8.

10 ... Bb7

Of course, on 10 ... exd4 would have followed 11 Nxd4, but now Black threatens to take the d4 pawn.

11 c3



11 ... c5

By attacking the e4 pawn, Black strives to provoke the advance d5, after which the operation with f4 loses its significance, and White's light-squared bishop is set against its own e4 and d5 pawns; however Black, on the other hand, with a locked centre, obtains active possibilities on the king's flank. And yet White goes half-way to meeting the opponent's intentions, apparently fearing the variation 12 Bc2 cxd4 13 cxd4 d5! with an initiative in the centre.

12 d5 c4!

Black's plan is cast in its final form. With his following moves he exchanges his knight for the bishop e3, having in mind to transfer his king's bishop to the a7-g1 diagonal. True, the moment for this comes only after 24(!) moves, but the manoeuvre itself is already intended now.

13 Bc2 Ng4 14 Ng3 Nxe3

It would be possible to raise the objection against this exchange that Black willingly opens the f-file, thereby extending the sphere of action for the enemy rook. However, each move must be assessed not on the basis of immediately apparent consequences, but in accordance with the role which it plays in the general plan of play. It can happen that a move in itself seems meaningless, really useless, whereas in the plan it plays a highly significant role. From what was said earlier, it will already be clear to the reader that the manoeuvre ... Ng4xe3, though small, is an important component of part of Black's plan. Consequently, the particular condition of the open f-file should not be taken into account in the present case.

15 fxe3 g6 16 Qe2

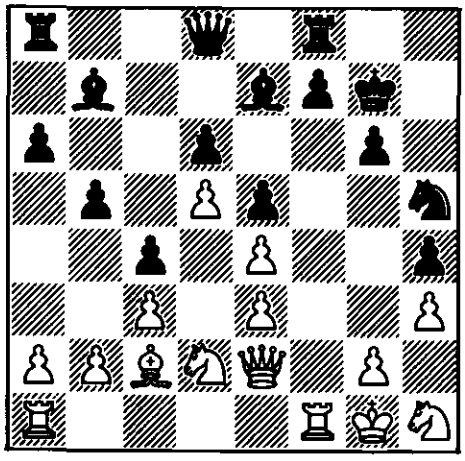
Can it be said that White's queen and rook are not harmo-

niously placed? No it cannot. And yet the harmony of White's pieces is not linked to a plan, does not have a special-purpose objective and is limited to mechanical intercommunication. This, if it may be so expressed, is not harmonious activity, but harmonious inactivity - the result of the passive tactics chosen by White. This allows Black, without any hindrance, to realise his plan of attack, at the basis of which lies the really harmonious action of all the pieces, including even the king.

White should plan his play on the queen's flank - the only area where he could give the opponent some trouble and in any case somewhat restrict the freedom of his operation.

His real plan should be based on the advance a4 and b3, then sending his heavy pieces on to the open lines, and the minor pieces - to an attack on the c4 (or b5) pawn. This possibility is also available over the next moves.

16 ... Nf6 17 Rf2 h5 18 h3 h4 19 Nh1 Kg7 20 Rff1 Nh5



Over a period of 18 moves, Black, without a single exchange, without hurrying, prepares the break ... f6-f5, arranging all his pieces in accordance with the principle of harmony. After the opening of the f-file, a decisive blow will be delivered on it by the rooks.

21 Nf3 Bc8 22 Nh2 Bg5 23 Rfe1 Bd7 24 Nf3 Be7 25 Rf1

More consistent was 25 Nh2, since now Black, as it were, has gained a tempo. In the same position three moves ago the Black bishop was still standing on c8. It often happens that, in positions with a locked pawn chain, a loss of tempo has no significance. Here, however, despite the presence of all 16 pawns, the position in no way can be considered blocked, in view of the possibility of a break on the f-file. From the point of view of this idea, the bishop stands better on d7 than on c8, since after ... Qc8 the Black queen and bishop begin jointly to centre fire on the breakthrough point - the f5 square.

25 ... Rh8 26 Qf2 Be8

The f7 square needs to be defended.

27 Rfe1 g5

This move is possible because White is powerless to exploit the f5 square; consequently, in the present position it is not a weakness.

28 Nh2 Bd7 29 Qe2 Qc8 30 Nf2

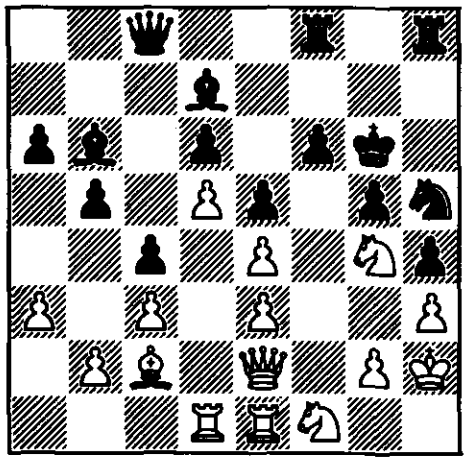
Attacking the g4 square for the fourth time, but what next? The

forces of both sides act in concord, but for Black the harmony is subordinate to a purposeful plan of attack; for White, however, it is based on the tactics of waiting manoeuvres. This is a colossal difference.

30 ... Ng3 31 Qf3 Qb7 32 Nf1 Nh5 33 Nh2 Raf8 34 a3 Kg6 35 Rad1 Bd8 36 Nf1 Bb6

At last, this is where the bishop takes up a fighting position!

37 Kh2 f6 38 Qe2 Qc8 39 Ng4



At first, Black intended to double rooks on the f-file behind the pawn, but, by looking at the position more closely, he is convinced that White could, by playing Rd2 and Bd1, force the retreat of the knight to g7, whereas in the plan it is destined to invade on g3. And so the time for the breakthrough has arrived!

39 ... f5 40 exf5+ Bxf5 41 Bxf5+ Qxf5 42 Rc1 Rh7 43 Qc2

It is difficult to call this move a mistake, but it is undoubtedly easier for Black to realise his advantage without queens.

43 ... Qxc2 44 Rxc2 Rhf7 45 Nd2

45 Rcc1 maintained chances of a more stubborn resistance.

45 ... Ng3 46 Nf3 e4 47 Nd4 Bxd4 48 cxd4

On the face of it, better seems 48 exd4, but in this case Black wins by sacrificing the exchange: 48 ... Rf1 49 Rcc1 R1f2 50 Nxf2 Rxf2 51 Rb1 Kf5 52 Kg1 Rc2 (threatening ... Kf4 and then ... e3) 53 Ref1+ Nxf1 54 Rxf1+ Kg6 55 Rf2 Rxf2 56 Kxf2 Kf5 57 Ke3 g4.

48 ... Rf1

All Black's pieces operate in rare harmony. White's pieces have no co-ordination. Resistance is useless.

49 Rcc1 Rxe1 50 Rxe1 a5 0:1

In view of the variation 51 Kg1 b4 52 axb4 axb4 53 Nf2 c3 54 bxc3 bxc3, and then c2 and c1(Q).

In this game White sinned against all the principles of planning. His play lacked concrete ideas, had hardly any sense of dynamism, and finally did not have a harmonious operation of pieces.

Let us sum up.

The harmonious operation of pieces should be subordinate to the planned objective. It will be effective only when it embodies the way to the realisation of a concrete, dynamic plan. However, purely constructive harmony, set up only on the basis of a superficial inter-

dependence of pieces, not only does not promote further, but in a number of cases even prevents the realisation of a concrete plan. The more economic the harmonious operation, the more effective it is.

The structure of a harmonious operation can be diverse and depends upon the features of the position. The harmonious operation of forces represents a tactical struggle.

The capture of space promotes the harmonious operation of the pieces. Particularly helpful is the opening of ranks and vacant space in the rear, which makes it easier to transfer pieces from one flank to the other.

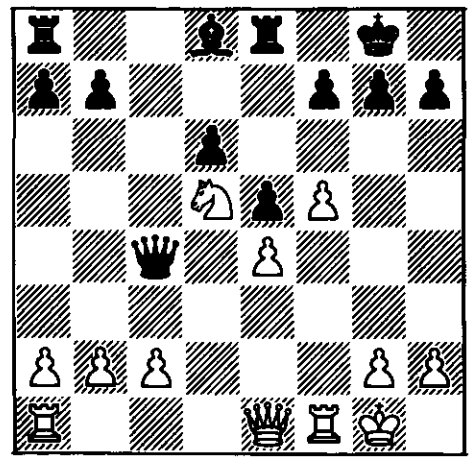
Finally, harmony in the operation of pieces is one of the basic elements of chess aesthetics. Combinations, being the main form of expression of beauty in chess art, represent at the same time also an absolute form of the harmonious operation of pieces.

B: Squares

1: Weak points

In the process of the chess game, weak and strong points are often formed in the positions of both opponents. A strong point is a square where one of the pieces consolidates itself so firmly that it will be difficult to drive it away or exchange it. A strong square for one side will of course be weak for the other.

We illustrate this statement with an example.



The d5 square is a strong point for White and a weak one for Black. The White knight established here cannot be driven off or exchanged by a piece of equal value and its activity, extending to many squares in Black's camp, severely cramps him. It is easier for White to carry out an attack on the enemy king's position with support from this knight. And in fact the game from which this position is taken (**Smyslov-Rudakovsky**, 14th USSR Championship 1945) ended in a quick defeat for Black.

18 c3 b5 19 b3 Qc5+ 20 Kh1 Rc8 21 Rf3 Kh8 22 f6! gxf6 23 Qh4 Rg8 24 Nxf6 Rg7 25 Rg3 Bxf6 26 Qxf6 Rg8 27 Rd1 d5 28 Rxg7 1:0

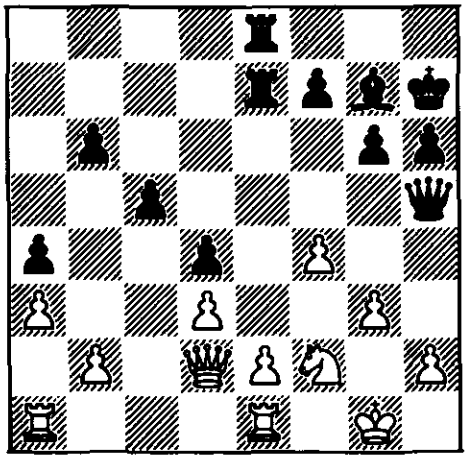
It is not hard to see that Black's main trouble was the impossibility of defending the d5 square while at the same time attacking it. Precisely this circumstance was his

weakness. If, in the diagrammed position, the Black pawn were not on d6, but on c7, the very same point would cease to be weak, since Black could attack it by ... c6 and force the knight to retreat. The same thing applies if Black did not have a black-squared, but a white-squared bishop or a knight, and consequently could exchange the knight which has settled on d5.

An so the potential weakness of a square arises as a result of the impossibility of attacking it with pawns. However, such a square should only be considered a real weakness when an enemy piece, which it will not be possible to drive away or eliminate by an exchange, threatens to take up a position on d5.

A weak square is, at the same time, a weak point, but the concept "weak point" applies not only to a weak square.

A weak point is also a pawn which is threatened with attack by enemy pieces and which is very difficult to defend.



In this position, depicting a moment from the game **Zubarev-Rubinstein** (Moscow 1925), the e2 square, on which White has a backward pawn, is a weak point.

The e2 pawn is attacked by three pieces and defended by only two. It is important to mention that in White's position the e3 point is also weak, which makes the move e4 impossible. On 34 Ne4 follows ... f5. After 34 g4 Qh4 35 Kg2 Re3! 36 Rac1 f5 37 gxf5 gxf5 White loses the f4 pawn and in addition falls under an irresistible attack. Zubarev prefers to give up the e2 pawn at once, but also this does not save him from quick ruin:

34 Qd1 Rxe2 35 Rxe2 Qxe2 36 Qxa4 Re6 37 Rb1 Qf3 38 Qd1 Re2 39 Qf1 c4 40 b4 cxd3 41 Rb3 Rxf2 0:1

If, on the 40th move, he had played dxc4, then, of course, would have followed 40 ... d3 with the irresistible ... Bd4.

A weak point could also be a pawn which, up to a certain time, is not threatened by anything, but which after some time could become an object of attack by the opponent.

Thus, in the starting position, the f2 and f7 points are weaker than the others, since in a number of opening they systematically become objects of attack; at the same time these points cannot be considered weak squares.

A weak square and a weak point will sometimes be a temporary feature, in so far as the majority of chess processes proceed dynamically and the conditions of the struggle are constantly changing.

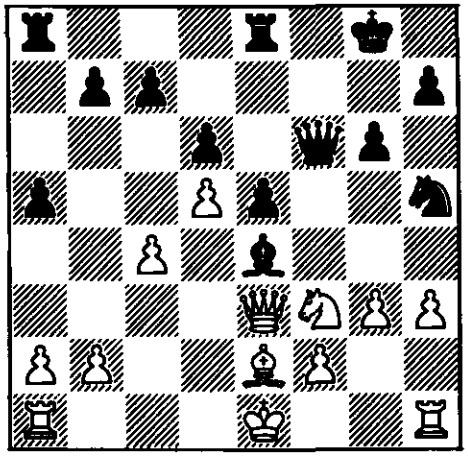
We pass on to a look at planned processes, connected with the struggle for the creation of a weak square, the occupation of it and the realisation of the advantage ensuing from this.

2: The "Eternal" Knight

When a knight occupies an impregnable position on a weak square in the centre or in the opponent's camp, it becomes particularly strong. Not for nothing do we give such a piece the graphic name "eternal" knight.

We will look at a few examples in which the "eternal" knight decides the outcome of the struggle.

The following position arose after the move 18 Qe3 in the game **Izmailov-Kasparyan**, played in the semi-final of the 7th USSR Championship (1931).



18 ... Bxf3

Possible was also 18 ... Bf5, on which bad is 19 g4? Nf4, firmly occupying the weak square. White would have to reply 19 Nh4, so as on 19 ... Nf4 to boldly continue 20 0-0-0.

19 Qxf3

After capturing with the queen, accurate play is required from White to prevent the opponent obtaining the "eternal" knight, by transferring it via the march-route ... Ng7-f5-d4. After 19 Bxf3 Ng7 20 Be4 Black would hardly have achieved this objective.

19 ... Qe7 20 Qe4 Ng7 21 h4 Nf5 22 h5?

A weak move, which only delays for a short while the invasion of the knight on d4. He could have obtained counter-chances by playing 22 Bg4 Nd4 23 0-0-0, or the quieter 23 0-0, preparing f4.

22 ... Qg5 23 Rd1 Rf8 24 Qg4

White should not head for the endgame, where, in the present situation, it is far easier to realise the advantage of the "eternal" knight.

24 ... Qxg4 25 Bxg4 Nd4

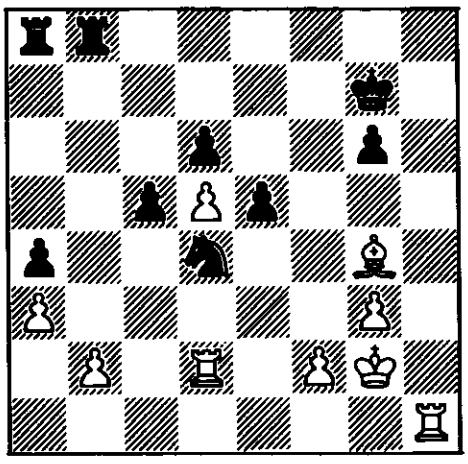
The objective has been now achieved!

26 Kf1 a4 27 a3 c5 28 Rd2 b5 29 cxb5 Nxb5 30 Be6+ Kg7 31 hxg6 hxg6 32 Kg2 Nd4 33 Bg4 Rfb8

(See next diagram)

34 Re1 Ra7 35 Bd1 Kf6 36 f4 exf4 37 gxf4 Rh8

Threatening ... Rah7 with a



dangerous attack. White has to go in for further exchanges.

38 Rh1 Rxh1 39 Kxh1 Kf5 40 Rg2 Kxf4 41 Rxg6 Ke5 42 Rg5+ Ke4 43 Rh5 Ra8 44 Kg1 Rb8 45 Bxa4 Rxb2 46 Kf1 Ke3 47 Rh3+ Nf3 0:1

Spanish Game
White: **G.Levenfish**
Black: **P.Dubinin**
(9th USSR Championship 1934)

1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nf6 3 Nc3 Nc6 4 Bb5 d6

By a transposition of moves, a variation of the Steinitz Defence with the position of the knight on f6, has been obtained. In this variation Black gets a rather cramped position, but practice has shown that it is difficult for White to exploit the small advantage he gains in the centre.

5 d4 exd4

An unjustified exchange. The correct reply was 5 ... Bd7. True, also in this case Black would later have to exchange on d4, but this occurs after he has mobilised his principal forces and prepared for castling.

6 Nxd4 Bd7 7 Bxc6 bxc6

Black endeavours to retain his white-squared bishop. In the event of 7 ... Bxc6 8 Nxc6 bxc6 9 Qf3 Qd7 10 h3 Be7 11 Bf4 0-0 12 0-0 followed by Rad1 and Rfe1, it is difficult for him to withstand the concentrated attack of all the opponent's pieces.

8 Qf3

This active development of the queen, with the potential threat of e5, has become possible only as a consequence of Black's 5th move.

8 ... c5

If 8 ... Be7, then 9 e5 dxe5 10 Nxc6 Bxc6 11 Qxc6+ Nd7 12 Nd5 Bd6 13 Bg5 f6 14 Be3 0-0 15 0-0, and by further playing Rd1 White consolidates his achievement in the centre. The c6 and d5 squares are real weaknesses.

9 Nf5 Bxf5

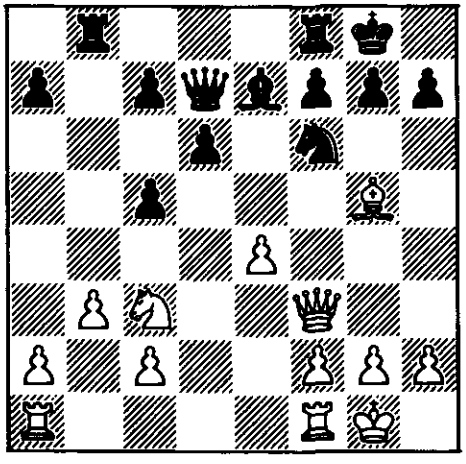
All the same, he has to exchange the white-squared bishop. The knight on f5 is very strongly posted and prevents castling, and as a consequence also the mobilisation of Black's forces. The knight cannot be driven back by 9 ... g6, in view of 10 Bg5 gxf5 11 e5 dxe5 12 Bxf6 e4 13 Nxe4. These variations show the strength of the queen's position on f3 before Black has castled.

10 Qxf5 Qd7 11 Qf3 Rb8 12 0-0 Be7 13 b3 0-0

It is necessary for Black now to keep the white squares under con-

stant control. The main role in the carrying out of this task falls upon the knight, therefore he must avoid the exchange of it for the enemy bishop for as long as possible. You see, in this case, the task of defence lies wholly on the pawns. For example, he has to play ... c6 to defend the d5 square, but this severely weakens the d6 point; the move ... g6, to defend the f5 square, leads to the creation of new weaknesses in the castled position. From this point of view, Black's last move is inaccurate. The exchange of bishop for knight enters into White's plan and it would be useful to forestall it by 13 ... h6.

14 Bg5



White consistently carries out his line. True, he does not yet threaten to take the knight, but after 15 Rad1 the threat of exchange becomes unpleasant.

14 ... Nd5?

Astonishing - Black himself meets his opponent's wishes!

Really, if the knight moves away, then 14 ... Ne8 is better, though this also breaks the communication of the Black rooks. Nevertheless, after 14 ... Ne8 15 Bxe7 Qxe7 16 Nd5 Qe6, Black could defend himself not without success, having left himself the possibility of ... c6, while the king's rook is introduced into play by means of ... f6 and ... Rf7. In this plan of defence, the knight would have played a great role, covering the c7, d6 and g7 points.

There was also another possibility of counteracting White's plan - 14 ... h6 and on 15 Bh4 g5 16 Bg3 Rfe8. The drawback of this continuation is the rather weakened king's flank and in particular the f5 square, but in return Black would have an object of attack - the e4 pawn.

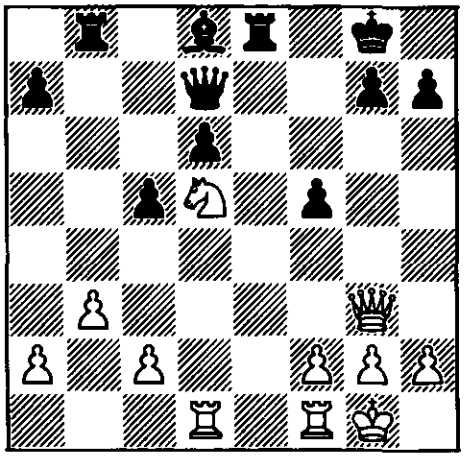
15 Nxd5 Bxg5 16 Qg3 Bd8 17 Rad1 f5?

Yet another mistake, leading to White's knight on d5 becoming "eternal". However, Black's position is very difficult. Bad is 17 ... c6 18 Ne3, and the weakness on d6 is irreparable; but, on the other hand, it is difficult for him to develop play without ... c6, since the knight d5 paralyses all his activity.

18 e5! Re8

Also after 18 ... c6 19 Nf6+ Bxf6 20 Rxd6 Qc7 21 exf6 Rxf6 22 Rxf6 the endgame is miserable for Black, but this was the lesser evil.

19 exd6 cxd6



White has successfully completed the first part of his plan; he has an "eternal" knight in the centre. This advantage is quite sufficient for victory.

The struggle approaches the concluding stage of realisation of the advantage. Supported by the powerful position of the "eternal" knight, White develops an irresistible attack on the king's flank.

20 Rfe1 Re6 21 Nf4 Rxe1+ 22 Rxe1 Ba5 23 Nd5 Bd8 24 h4 Rb7 25 c4 Kf7 26 Qf3 Kg8 27 Qe2

With the threat to win the bishop after Qe8+. The reply 27 ... Bxh4 is not possible because of 28 Qh5.

27 ... g6 28 h5 Kf8 29 h6

With the intention of continuing Qb2. There were also other ways, for example at once 29 Qb2 or 29 hxg6 hxg6 30 Nf4.

29 ... Bg5

Black does not even stop the threat. His last hope was 29 ... Qf7, but after 30 Qd3 a5 31 Nf4 he also would not have been able to resist for long.

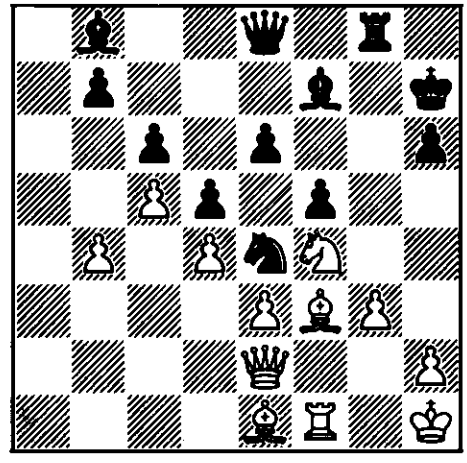
30 Qb2 Kg8 31 f4 Bd8 32 Nf6+

A beautiful conclusion! Of course Re7 or Ne7+ are also sufficient.

32 ... Bxf6 33 Qxf6 d5 34 cxd5 1:0

On 34 ... Rb6 follows 35 Re8+.

In the 16th game of the world championship match **Bronstein-Botvinnik** (1951), the following position was reached:



Without going into the concrete aim of Black's last move, 46 ... Qe8, Bronstein played

47 Qd3?

There followed

47 ... Bxf4 48 exf4 Bh5!

and Bronstein was faced with a difficult choice. An invasion of the enemy pieces on the a-file is threatened after 49 Bg2 Qa8, the knight occupies a menacing position in the centre on e4; in the event of 49 Bxe4 dxe4 50 Qa3 Bf3+ 51 Kg1 Qh5 52 Qe3 Qh3 53 Qf2 h5, the threat of ... h4 is irresistible. Bronstein decides to allow Black the "eternal" knight, but endeavours to get some compensation for

this by occupying the a-file.

49 Qa3 Bxf3+ 50 Rxf3 Rg7

Defending the b7 pawn in the event of the possible attack on it by the queen. There is nothing in 50 ... Qa8, since White will not himself exchange, but reply 51 Rd3, sticking to waiting tactics. The tactical diversion 50 ... Qh5 likewise leads to nothing after 51 Kg2.

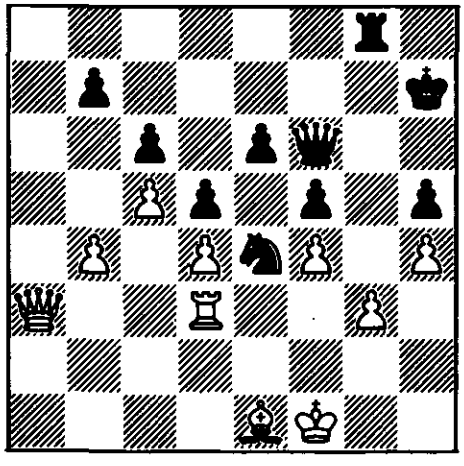
Black's plan consists of creating just a few more weak points in the opponent's camp (for example, by provoking the move h4), then, by attacking them, to divert White's pieces from defence of the a-file and, finally, to occupy this important strategical path of invasion. With support from the "eternal" knight, it will then not be difficult to deliver the concluding blow.

51 Kg2 Qd8 52 Kf1 Qf6 53 Rd3 h5 54 h4

Of course, he cannot allow the move ... h4.

54 ... Rg8

Having in mind, after ... Qg7, by keeping the d4 pawn under attack, to create the threat of invasion via g4.

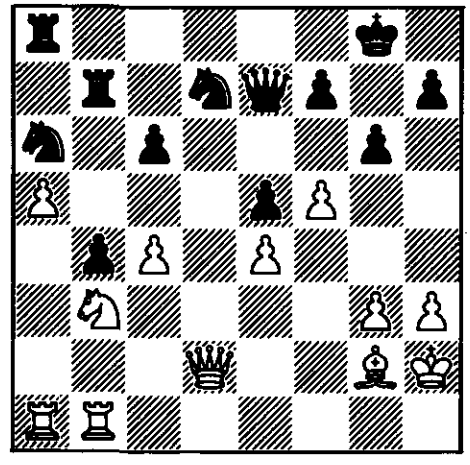


55 Rd1

This rather eases Black's realisation of his positional advantage, but what can he do? If 55 Qa7, then 55 ... Qg7, and White is in zugzwang. 56 Qb6 is not possible in view of 56 ... Ra8, while, upon the retreat of the queen along the a-file, follows ... Qg4.

55 ... Qg7 56 Qf3 Kh6 57 Kg2 Ra8 and Black won.

The struggle was concluded with the "eternal" knight in the game **Terpugov-Bronstein**, (19th USSR Championship 1951):



30 Rb2 Ndc5 31 Nxc5 Qxc5 32 f6

Not only a useless move, in so far as the raid Qh6 is repulsed by the reply ... Qf8, but also a serious positional miscalculation. You see it is clear that Black is dreaming about the transfer of the knight to the invulnerable d4 square. White, however, with his last move, himself takes away control from the e6 square, which is a transit point on the way to this cherished aim. It is not surprising that very soon he

suffers defeat.

Meanwhile it was not an entirely bad position for White. He has available a number of active possibilities. Worth considering, for example, is the pushing of the h-pawn. After 32 h4 it is dangerous to take the c4 pawn with the queen, in view of 33 Rc1. White, however, intends to continue h5, Bh3 and Rf1 with pressure on the king's flank.

32 ... Nc7 33 Ra4 Na6 34 Qh6

Yet another unnecessary thrust, which helps Black to carry out his plan even sooner. The rook is badly placed on a4, as incidentally soon becomes clear, and it should have simply retraced its steps.

34 ... Qf8 35 Qg5

The exchange of queens simplifies the struggle to Black's advantage. The f6 pawn is very weak, it is not easy to realise the plan of invasion on d4. It is natural that White endeavours to complicate the situation as much as possible on the king's flank.

35 ... Nc5!

The bad position of the White rook on a4 tells. It has to go back where it came from, since 36 Raxb4 Rxb4 37 Rxb4 loses the exchange after 37 ... Nxe4.

36 Ra1 h6 37 Qe3

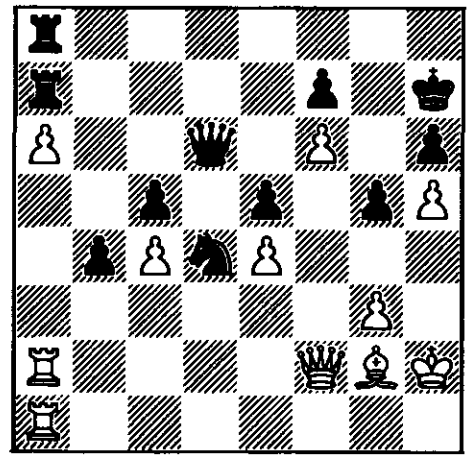
Of course, 37 Qxe5 is not possible, in view of 37 ... Nd3.

37 ... Kh7 38 Rd2 Ne6 39 a6 Rba7 40 Rda2 c5 41 h4 Qd6

On top of everything, White has trouble with the a6 pawn.

42 h5 g5 43 Qf2 Nd4

The knight which every chessplayer "dreams" about.



44 Rd2 Kg8

Black wants, after 45 ... Rxa6 46 Rxa6, to take on a6 with the rook, which at the present moment would not have been possible in view of Rxd4 followed by Qf5+-c8+ with a draw.

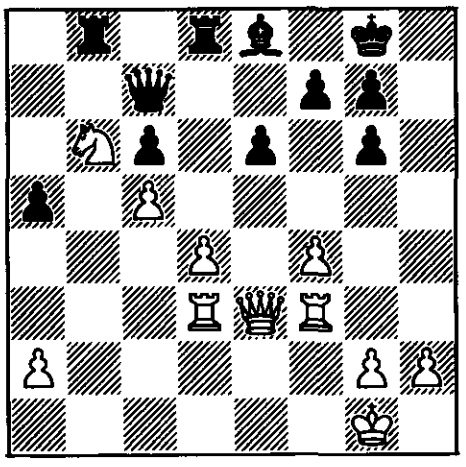
45 Rda2

White sealed this move, but then **resigned** without playing on. A correct decision, since after ... Rxa6 the b-pawn, with support from the "eternal" knight reaches the first rank without any trouble.

3: Weak Squares on the sixth (third) rank

One of the most tempting objectives of a plan is to create real weaknesses of squares on the 6th (3rd) ranks. The establishment of a knight or bishop on these squares usually represents just as decisive a positional achievement as obtaining the "eternal" knight. Sometimes these ideas are combined.

We also begin with just such an example.



The clash **Pillsbury- Chigorin** (Vienna 1898) arrived at this position. White's knight has settled down on the weak b6 square. Under its cover, he intends a plan of attack on the a5 pawn, upon the fall of which the passed a-pawn must have a decisive say.

However, Pillsbury strived too directly for this objective:

29 Ra3

on which Chigorin immediately sacrificed the exchange, if only to eliminate the "eternal" knight. Of course, after

29 ... Rxb6! 30 cxb6 Qxb6

White has a material advantage, but Black obtained definite counter-chances in connection with the weakness of the d4 pawn (weak point!).

The game continued:

31 Rf1 Rxd4

This, as the reply shows, does not win a pawn at all.

32 Rxa5 c5 33 Ra8 Kf8 34 Qh3 Ke7 35 Qh4+ f6 36 Qh8 Rd8 37 Qxg7+ Bf7 38 Rxd8 c4+ 39 Kh1 Qxd8 40 Rb1?

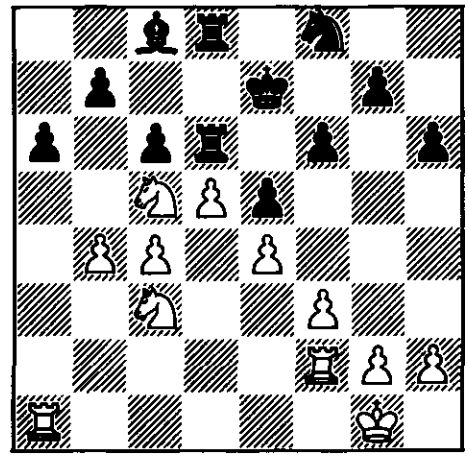
A presumptuous move, even leading to defeat. However, the correct 40 Qh6 Qd3 41 Rg1 Qd2 would have only achieved a draw.

40 ... c3!

Now Pillsbury has to give up the rook for this pawn and after a few more moves **he resigned**.

Returning to the position in the diagram we must once again emphasise the powerful role of the knight on b6, which is probably quite sufficient for victory. Only instead of 29 Ra3 it was necessary to play 29 Qe5 and if 29 ... Qa7, then 30 Rb3, consolidating the piece base of the knight.

In the following instructive example, both knights carry out a devastating raid on the 6th rank.



Before us is a position from the game **Romanovsky-Smorodsky** (3rd USSR Championship 1924). White is carrying out an offensive. His pawn group has already broken through to the 5th rank and is severely cramping Black. White's

c-pawn can advance to c5, but is it worth abandoning the c5 square with the knight? You see, this square is very weak, it is located in the enemy camp, and indeed the knight, together with the pawns, exerts serious pressure on the centre and the queen's flank. Thus the Black rook d6 does not have a single move. Also impossible is ... Nd7 in view of Ne6 and c5. The Black bishop is riveted to the b7 pawn, on ... b6 follows Nxa6.

Undoubtedly, White has various ways of realising his advantage. He stops at a plan to invade with the knight on the 6th rank - the d6 and b6 squares. Therefore the knight c5 abandons its excellent position, in order to penetrate even more deeply into the enemy position.

31 Nb3 Kf7 32 c5 R6d7

Some players would be tempted now by the advance d6, but this would only help Black to free himself a little. There follows 33 ... Ke8, then ... Rf7, and the e6 square acts as a fine spring-board for the Black bishop and knight. Besides this, by "jamming" the d6 square with the pawn, White deprives one of his knights of an excellent piece base.

33 Na5

The knight heads for d6, via c4.

33 ... Rc7 34 Rd1 h5

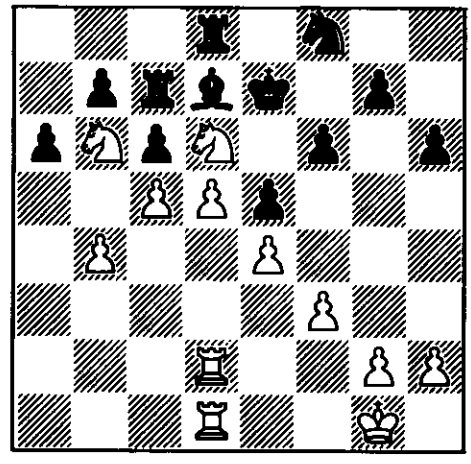
Black is helpless.

35 Rfd2 Rcd7 36 Na4

The beginning of a victorious nine move knight attack.

36 ... Ke8 37 Nb6 Rc7 38 Nac4 Bd7 39 Nd6+ Ke7

The objective is achieved. The White cavalry keeps the whole enemy army in a vice - a good example of how the strength is increased of a knight entering into the enemy camp on weak squares.



40 Nb5!

In this way White wins at least the exchange, in view of the threat d6+, and maintains the initiative. Further resistance by **Black** is useless and soon after he **resigned**.

We look further at the following game.

Queen's Indian Defence
White: **A.Alekhine**
Black: **J.R.Capablanca**
(New York 1927)

1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 e6 3 Nf3 b6 4 g3 Bb7 5 Bg2 c5 6 d5

This aggressive continuation was recommended, in his day, by Rubinstein. Against it, great accuracy in defence is required from Black. He is obliged to take the pawn, in order to avoid difficulties

with the development of his queen's-side forces, but this leads to an unpleasant pin of the d5 pawn. Exploiting this pin, White strives to create in the future a base for his pieces on the d5 square. The whole of this opening variation leads to a tense, sharp struggle, in which the first piece exchange comes only after 17 moves.

6 ... exd5 7 Nh4 g6 8 Nc3 Bg7 9 0-0 0-0 10 Bf4

An interesting plan, introduced by Alekhine, with the aim of exploiting the rather weak point d6. For example, in the event of 10 ... d6 11 cxd5, Black cannot develop the knight at once on d7, while after ... Nh5 Black's influence in the centre is weakened and the knight is not particularly well placed.

More often employed here is 10 cxd5, followed by an advance of pawns in the centre (e4 and f4).

10 ... d6 11 cxd5 Nh5 12 Bd2

In retreating to d2, White is apparently guided by the desire to retain the possibility of advancing the centre pawns, in particular the advance e4. The fact of the matter is that already after three moves he finds it necessary to transfer the bishop to e3, even though his pawn is still on e2. The reply 12 Be3 is more purposeful, and for other reasons. Black cannot display activity on the queen's flank without the move ... c4. Meanwhile, with the position of the bishop on e3, it gives White the possibility of centralising the bishop by Bd4.

12 ... Nd7 13 f4?

This move should be blamed not so much in itself, since with consistent play by White in the future it would not have led to particularly serious consequences, as for being the beginning of a false idea. It is incomprehensible why White refrains from 13 e4 with the threat Nf5, and if 13 ... Nhf6 then f4.

13 ... a6

Black's plan becomes clear: with support from the excellently placed bishop on g7 he intends to carry out a full-scale pawn offensive on the queen's flank. This plan is highly active.

14 Bf3

White prompts the knight to return to a better position. More consistent was 14 a4 and then e4, or even at once 14 e4, threatening Nf5. In this case, Black would probably play ... Nhf6 himself.

14 ... Nhf6 15 a4?

Preventing ... b5, but leading to an appreciable weakening of the queen's flank, which the opponent manages to exploit in the future.

Also by continuing 15 e4 now, White could still successfully contend for the initiative. For example, 15 e4 b5 16 Qc2 and if 16 ... b4, then 17 Nd1!, threatening the manoeuvre Nd1-e3-c4. If, however, 16 ... c4, then 17 Rae1 Re8 18 Nd1, and the concentration of White's pieces in the centre

with real purpose in view - the advance e4-e5, must cause Black anxiety.

15 ... c4

This move fixes the weak square b3, while in the event of the advance of the e-pawn - also the d3 square, since the Black knight has a direct road to this point via c5.

16 Be3 Qc7

With the aim, in the event of 17 ... Nc5 18 Bxc5, to capture on c5 with the queen. Black's pieces operate very harmoniously, his rooks will take up a dominating position on the e-file, White's d5 pawn is weak. Convinced that he has a bad position, he launches a reckless attack on the king's flank.

17 g4

White could staunchly defend himself by continuing 17 Qc2 Nc5 18 Rad1 Rfe8 19 Bf2 Nb3 20 e4.

17 ... Nc5 18 g5 Nfd7 19 f5?

This lets Black have yet another piece base - the e5 square, without at the same time achieving anything for White.

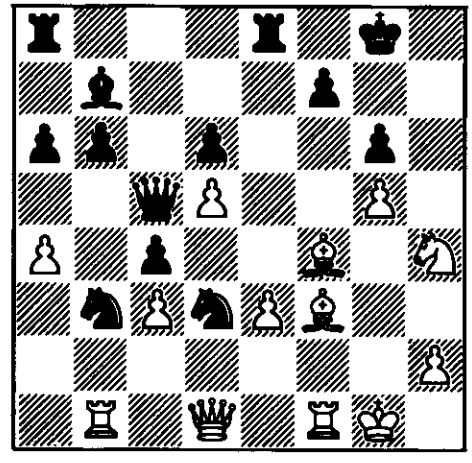
It is known that, on the day of this encounter with Capablanca, at this time the world champion, Alekhine was extremely nervous and this can perhaps explain his play. You see, the condition of a chessplayer and even his character have a close connection with the style and quality of his play.

White continues to play as if "all is lost". Meanwhile by continuing 19 Qe1, and then Rd1 and Qf2, he could successfully defend himself, reserving the advance f5 for a convenient moment.

19 ... Rfe8 20 Bf4 Be5 21 Bg4 Nb3 22 fxg6 hxg6 23 Rb1 Bxc3 24 bxc3 Qc5+ 25 e3

Of course, not Kg2 or Kh1, on which follows the capture of the d5 pawn with check, but now the d3 square is weakened and Black immediately exploits this.

25 ... Ne5 26 Bf3 Nd3!



He need not hurry with the capture of the pawn. The knights, supported by the c4 pawn, are picturesquely perched on d3 and b3. This elegant picture repeats the set-up which we saw in the previous example, but here its background, that is the positional circumstances, are more complicated and structurally colourful.

White must at all costs relieve his situation, but the exposed position of his king does not allow him to avert serious loss in the approaching crisis.

27 Kh1 Bxd5 28 Rxb3 Nxf4 29

Rb1 Rxe3 30 Ng2 Rxf3! 31 Rxf3 Nxg2 32 Kxg2 Re8 33 Kf1 Bxf3 34 Qxf3 Qxg5 35 Re1

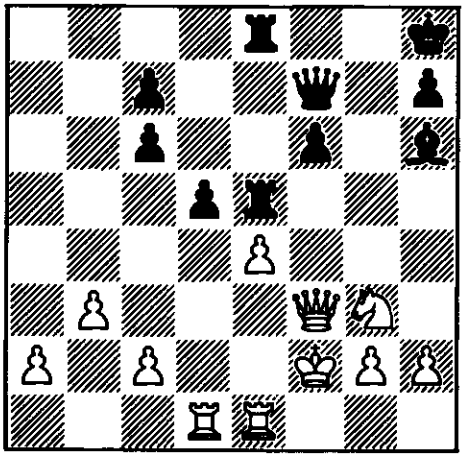
35 Rxb6 is not possible in view of 35 ... Qc1+ and 36 ... Qd2+.

35 ... Rxe1+

Even in the queen ending, resistance three pawns down is useless. **White resigned** on the 42nd move.

Also a bishop invasion and consolidation on the 6th (3rd) rank, particularly on the e6, d6 (e3, d3) squares is a considerable and at times decisive positional achievement.

The ending of the second game of the match for the world championship between **Em.Lasker** and **Tarrasch** (1908) serves as a classic example of this plan. Lasker, with the Black pieces, played the opening poorly, lost a pawn and his defeat seemed inevitable. From then on, however, thanks to indifferent play by the opponent, he succeeded in starting up a counter-struggle in the centre around the isolated White pawn on e4.



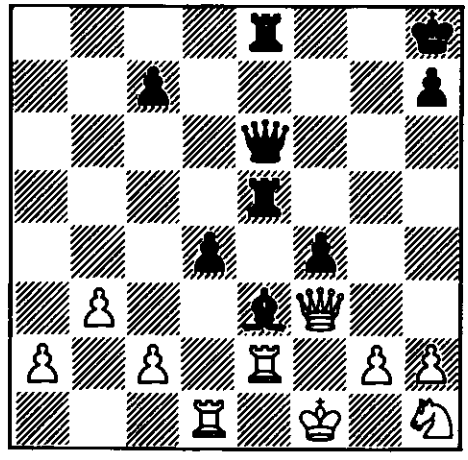
Black has just played 24 ... d5 and threatens not only 25 ... dxe4 26 Nxe4 f5, but also simply 25 ... Qg6. The correct continuation for White was now 25 Nf5, so as, on 25 ... dxe4, to reply 26 Nxh6. In the event, however, of the retreat of the bishop, possible is 26 exd5, provoking an exchange of rooks; the knight occupies an excellent position on f5 and after 25 ... Bf8 (for example 26 exd5 Bc5+ 27 Kf1 Qg6 28 Rxe5 Rxe5 29 g4) it is difficult for Black to continue the attack.

However, Tarrasch takes at once on d5 and exposes the e3 square, which Lasker does not fail to energetically exploit.

25 exd5? Be3+ 26 Kf1 cxd5 27 Rd3

White under-estimates the role of the bishop on e3. Also now he should continue 27 Nf5 d4 28 Nxe3 dxe3 29 Re2, submitting to a cramped, but far from hopeless position.

27 ... Qe6 28 Re2 f5 29 Nh1 f4 30 Rd1 d4



The power of the bishop is now

revealed in all its brilliance. Under its cover and its assistance, Black's attack swiftly and without any hindrance leads to the objective.

31 Nf2 Qa6 32 Nd3 Rg5 33 Ra1 Qh6 34 Ke1

On 34 h3, decisive is 34 ... Rg3 35 Qd5 f3.

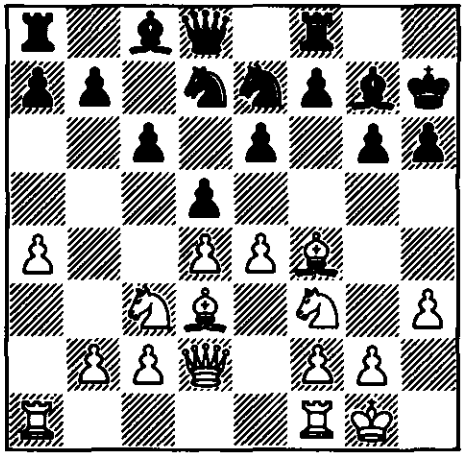
34 ... Qxh2 35 Kd1 Qg1+ 36 Ne1

Or 36 Re1 Qxg2.

36 ... Rge5 37 Qc6 R5e6 38 Qxc7 R8e7 39 Qd8+ Kg7 40 a4 f3 41 gxf3 Bg5 0:1

After 42 Rxe6 Rxe6 43 Qa5 Bh4 White suffers serious material loss.

The following position arose in the game **Alekhine-Mikenas** from the 5th Olympiad (1933):



Black has a weak d6 square, to which the enemy bishop is clearly heading. Mikenas, however, ignoring the threat, continued

12 ... a6

apparently having in mind an attack on the centre by ... c5 and, in this case, preventing the invasion of the knight on b5.

Interesting is Alekhine's comment apropos the move 12 ... a6: "Black does not take into account that he must at any price defend the d6 square. From now on the dominating position of White's black-squared bishop proves to be in itself sufficient advantage to decide the outcome of the struggle." In Alekhine's opinion, it was necessary to play ... Nf6 and then ... Ne8.

Further events developed thus:

13 Bd6 f5

Also this move, assisting the consolidation of the bishop on d6, bears witness to Black's incorrect assessment of the position. It was still useful to carry out the manoeuvre ... Nd7-f6-e8, for example 13 ... Nf6 14 e5 Ne8 15 Ba3 Rg8 16 h4 Nf5, though even in this case his position remains difficult due to the inactive queen's flank.

14 e5 Rg8 15 h4 b6

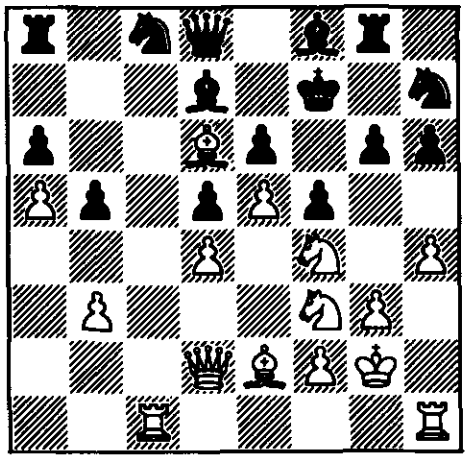
So as, after 16 ... Nf8 17 Qg5, to have the reply 17 ... Ra7.

16 Ne2 Nf8 17 a5 b5 18 g3 Rh8 19 Kg2 Kg8 20 Rh1 Kf7 21 Nf4 Rg8 22 b3 Nh7 23 c4 Bd7 24 Rac1 Bf8 25 Be2 Nc8 26 cxd5 cxd5

(see next diagram)

27 Bxf8

After the exchange of bishops, several weak black squares are created in the opponent's camp - b6, f6 and particularly c5; the last serves to the end of the game as an excellent base for the White pieces. Besides this, the White rooks



and queen soon occupy the c-file, which serves as a road of invasion into the enemy camp. All these achievements are to a considerable extent a consequence of the powerful positional pressure which the bishop on d6 has exerted over the course of 13 moves. It not only cramps Black and is an important factor in the development of all initiative, but has also forced him into a series of moves, leading to a weakening of his position.

Since we will shortly go over to a look at the role of open lines in the plan, we give the end of the game as a little introduction to this important strategical theme.

27 ... Nxf8 28 Rc5

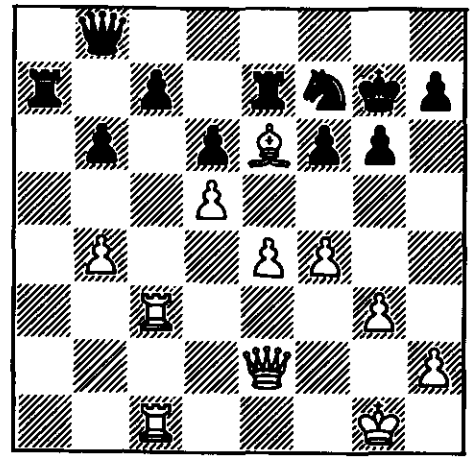
And so, not only the knight and bishop, to which we gave particular consideration when looking at the question of weak squares, but also the other pieces - the rooks, the queen, and in the endgame even the king, placed on weak points, prove to be a decisive influence on the course of the struggle.

28 ... Na7 29 Nd3 Kg7 30 Rhc1 Rc8 31 Rxc8 Bxc8 32 Qc3 Kh7 33 Qc5

The invasion begins. Black could still repel one or other direct threat, but he is not in a position to oppose White's offensive on the c-file with a planned defence.

33 ... Rg7 34 Qb6! Qe7 35 Nc5 g5 36 hxg5 hxg5 37 Ne1 and **Black** soon **resigned.**

We look at another example of an invasion of the bishop on the sixth rank in the enemy camp (the game **Holmov-Livshin**, 21st USSR Championship 1954).



In White's arrangement of pieces, one can see two important positional features: the bishop is established on the weak e6 square, while on the c-file the White rooks attack the backward pawn, the defence of which pins down Black's main forces. If it were not for this last circumstance, he might have himself exploited the open a-file for invasion into the enemy camp and to some extent compensated for the powerfully posted bishop e6.

41 b5

Preventing once and for all the advance of the c-pawn.

41 ... Qe8

The continuation 41 ... Nd8 42 e5 Nxe6 43 exd6 cxd6 44 dxe6 would have given White considerably better chances thanks to his control of the c-file and the passed pawn on e6. For example, 44 ... Rac7 is not possible. After the exchange of both rooks White wins with the move e7.

42 Qb2 Qf8 43 Re3 Qa8 44 Re2

Now Black cannot defend himself against the break e5, the strength of which is determined by the position of the bishop on e6.

44 ... Qf8 45 e5 Nd8

The main variation of the breakthrough consists of 45 ... dxe5 46 fxe5 Nxe5 47 Rxe5 fxe5 48 Rf1 Qd8 49 Qxe5+ Kh6 50 Qf4+ Kg7 51 Qf6+ Kh6 52 Rf4 and the mating threat is irresistible.

46 exd6 cxd6 47 Qd4 Rab7 48 g4 Re8 49 g5 Rbe7 50 f5

The opening of lines on the king's flank makes Black's resistance useless.

50 ... Rb7 51 Rf1 Kh8 52 gxf6 Nf7 53 fxg6 hxg6 54 Rg2 Qh6 55 Rg3 Kg8 56 Qd3 1:0

In the final position, the bishop e6 plays the main violin, as it did through the full extent of the attack.

4: Some Conclusions

In summing up everything that has been said about weak squares, we might first of all conclude that they present themselves as positional elements, capable of considerably increasing the strength of pieces (in the first place - the bishop or knight), sometimes to an extent which is sufficient to decide the outcome of the game.

This conclusion leads in earnest to the question about the relative strength of the pieces, which should be assessed according to the role fulfilled by them in a given concrete position.

Another conclusion is the establishment of the cause of weakened squares, which can be divided into two categories: (i) structural and (ii) positional.

The structural cause is determined by the position of the pawns. A square which cannot be attacked by pawns can be considered a structural weakness. However, it must be emphasised once again that the weakness of such a square is only potential. It only becomes a real weakness when there arises the positional possibility of the opponent exploiting this square as a base for his pieces. The absence of a bishop, operating on squares of the colour of the weakened square, or a knight which powerfully defends this square, likewise must relate to structural causes, since both one and the other circumstance in itself does not determine the actual

weakness of a square. With the development of the bishop on the flank (for example, on g2 for White), the pawn structure e3-f2-g3-h2 frequently arises, upon which the f3 and h3 squares are structurally weakened, but this circumstance in no way prevents contemporary opening theory recommending the "fianchetto" of the bishop in a great many openings.

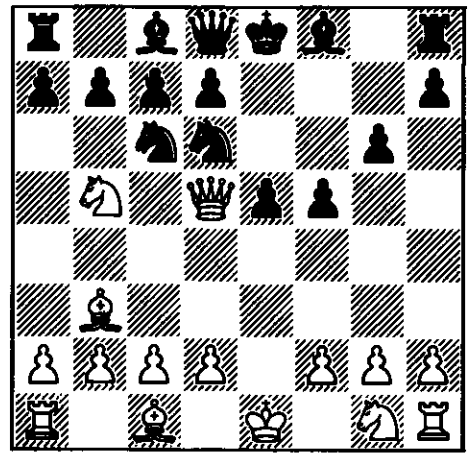
From this it is clear that structural weaknesses as such should not be feared, otherwise we ourselves are deprived of the possibility of carrying out many active plans of play. Nevertheless, with reference to manoeuvering, it is useful to avoid even structural weaknesses in a position if these are not properly motivated and well-founded.

C: Lines

The chessboard knows three types of lines - files, ranks and diagonals. Files serve as paths of invasion for the heavy pieces into the enemy camp; ranks - for the transfer of heavy pieces from one flank to the other, while, upon an invasion into the opponent's camp, also for delivery of a flank blow; diagonals - for action by the bishop and queen.

We begin with the joint action of the queen and bishop. These express themselves either in their doubling on an open diagonal or adjacent diagonals, or in an attack from different sides on weakened points in the opponent's camp.

In some openings, White quite quickly realises one of the aspects of harmonious activity of these pieces. As an example might serve the following variation of the Vienna Game: **1 e4 e5 2 Nc3 Nf6 3 Bc4 Nxe4 4 Qh5** (The first blow against the f7 point from two directions) **4 ... Nd6 5 Bb3 Nc6 6 Nb5 g6 7 Qf3** (The second combinational blow on the f7 point; this time the queen operates on the file) **7 ... f5 8 Qd5** (Doubling on the a2-g8 diagonal)

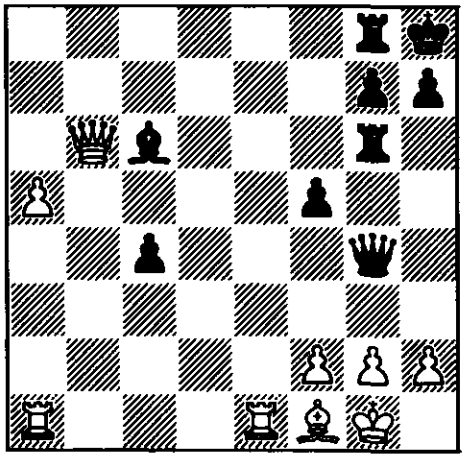


As is well-known, Black must sacrifice the exchange by 8 ... Qe7 in order to repulse the energetic attack on the f7 point. Admittedly practical experience shows that this gives him a dangerous initiative, which fully compensates for material losses.

White also quickly launches an attack along the a2-g8 diagonal on the f7 point in a number of branches of the Evans Gambit: e.g. in the variation 1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bc4 Bc5 4 b4 Bxb4 5 c3 Ba5 6 d4

d6 7 Qb3. Now Black cannot play either 7 ... Qe7 or 7 ... Qf6 because of the loss of a piece after 8 d5. The correct reply is 7 ... Qd7, which allows him to maintain good defensive resources.

In the middlegame, the attack of the bishop and queen on the long diagonal, with the aim of creating mating threats to the opponent's king, is the most effective expression of harmony in the operation of the diagonal pieces. We look at several instructive illustrations on this theme.



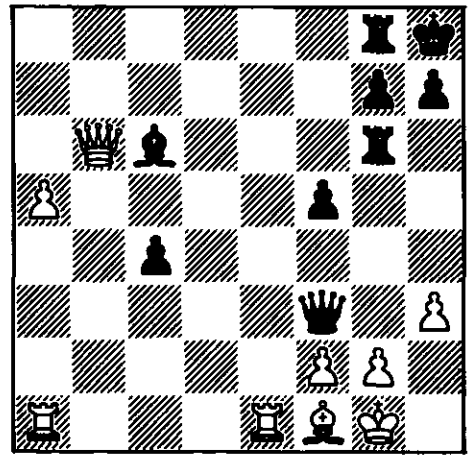
This is a position from the game **Alekhine-Tartakover** (Pistyan 1922). As far back as 10 moves ago, Black organised dangerous pressure on the long diagonal against the g2 pawn and, by further including the rook in the attack from the g6 square, has set White difficult problems. At the present moment, the deadly blow 31 ... Bxg2 is threatened. The move 31 g3 is obviously impossible because of 31 ... Qf3. Also insufficient is 31 f3 Bxf3 32 Qf2 Be4 - the extra pawn, together with the passed pawn on the c-file and the retention of pressure on the g2 point, must secure Black victory. Possible is this interesting development of the struggle: 33 a6 c3 34 a7 c2 35 Rxe4 Qxe4 36 Be2 Rc8 37 Rc1 Qa4 38 Bf3 Qa3! 39 Rxc2 Rxc2 40 a8(Q)+ Qxa8 41 Bxa8 Rc1+. Finally, on 31 Ra3 (intending to parry 31 ... Bxg2 with the move 32 Rg3), Black could simply reply 31 ... f4 and if 32 h3, then 32 ... Qg5, forcing the opponent to reconcile himself to the loss of a pawn after 33 f3 Bxf3.

Alekhine continued

31 h3

A little trap is contained in this move: on 31 ... Qxh3; 32 Qxc6! wins. If, however, 31 ... Qg5, then 32 Qe3 f4 33 Qe5 allows him to put up a stubborn resistance. However, Tartakover had prepared a convincing reply.

31 ... Qf3

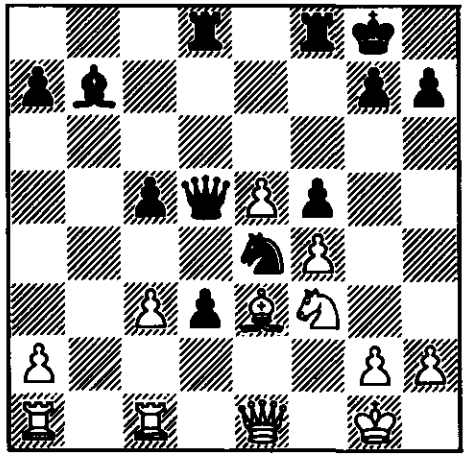


The attack on the g2 point is irresistible. On 32 Re3 follows mate in 3 moves: 32 ... Rxg2+ 33 Kh1 Rg1+ 34 Kxg1 Qxh1 mate. This variation brilliantly reflects

the dangers present with the doubling of the bishop and queen, in front, on the long diagonal and directed against the opponent's castled position. Therefore **White resigned.**

The idea of attacking the king's position by the method of doubling on the long diagonal with the queen and bishop firmly entered into creative praxis in the second half of the 19th century. Also Chigorin was a champion of it.

In a number of his games we find attacks built on this foundation.



Black's last move (the game **Schmidt-Chigorin**, Petersburg 1877) was 25 ... Qd5. The struggle developed like this:

26 Rd1 g5! 27 fxg5 f4 28 c4

White senses the danger and, by sacrificing a pawn, wants to gain time for defence.

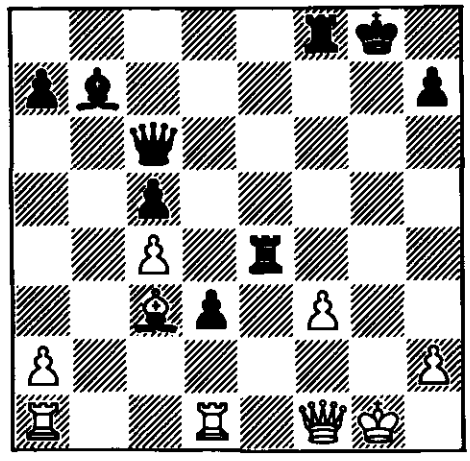
28 ... Qc6!

On 28 ... Qxc4 would have followed 29 Bd2 Qd5 30 h4.

29 Bd2 Nxg5 30 Nh4 Rd4 31 Bc3 Re4 32 Qf1 f3

The decisive breakthrough to the g2 point.

33 Nxf3 Nxf3+ 34 gxf3



34 ... Rg4+!

An apotheosis of the devastating action of the diagonal forces. In the event of 35 Kf2, ... Qxf3+ and ... Re4+ mates. However, mate is already unavoidable on any reply.

35 Kh1 Qxf3+ 36 Qxf3 Bxf3 mate.

A fine and similar sort of demolishing attack was built up by Chigorin in his 6th match game with Gunsberg (1890). We give this game in full.

Two Knights Defence
White: **I.Gunsberg**
Black: **M.Chigorin**

1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bc4 Nf6 4 0-0 Nxe4 5 d4 d5 6 Bb5 Bd7 7 Bxc6 bxc6 8 Nxe5 Bd6 9 f3

A move which seems to only take into account an immediate retreat of the knight. White could make castling difficult for Black by continuing 9 Nxd7 Qxd7 10 f3 Nf6 11 Re1+ Be7 12 Qe2 and he has to play 12 ... Kf8. In view of this, on

the previous move it would have been better for Black to develop his bishop on e7. After failing to exploit this favourable opportunity he gets the worse game.

9 ... Bxe5 10 dxe5 Nc5 11 b3 Ne6 12 f4 f5 13 Ba3

Chigorin used the blockading knight on e6 (on e3 for White) in many games.

This excellent positional idea fully deserves to be named after him.

13 ... Qh4 14 Nd2 h5

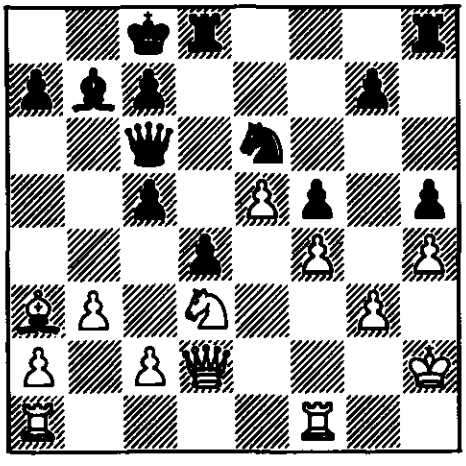
After 14 ... Nxf4 15 e6! White obtains a dangerous initiative.

15 g3 Qg4 16 Kg2 c5 17 h3 Qg6 18 Kh2 0-0-0 19 h4 Bc6 20 Nf3 Bb7!

The positional manoeuvre of the bishop conceals the idea of attack on the long diagonal.

21 Qd2 d4 22 Ne1 Qe8 23 Nd3 Qc6

The doubling is achieved. The powerful position of the bishop and queen serves as a basis for the decisive attack, which is developing move by move.

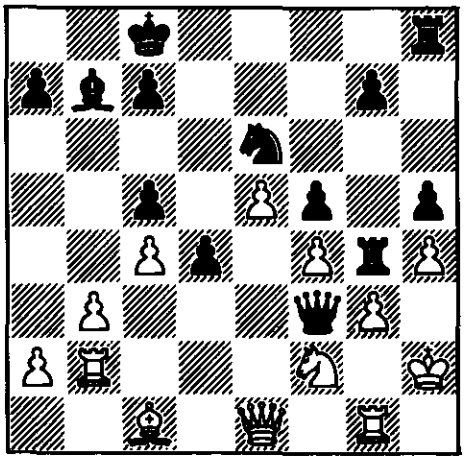


24 Rf2 Rdg8 25 Raf1 Rh6 26 Qa5 Qb6 27 Qe1

Of course the exchange of queens would improve Black's pawn structure, by making it more compact. Nevertheless, White should go in for this as the "lesser evil".

27 ... Rg6 28 c4 Rg4 29 Bc1 Qc6 30 Rg1 Rh8 31 Rb2 Qf3 32 Nf2

Clearly 32 Qe2 will not do, in view of 32 ... Rxg3.



32 ... g5! 33 Nxg4

The preliminary 33 fxg5 led to even worse consequences. Very beautiful, for example, is this variation: 33 fxg5 f4 34 Nxg4 hxg4 35 Rgg2 Nxg5 36 Kg1 Qxg2+ 37 Rxg2 Nf3+ and Black wins.

33 ... hxg4 34 Qf1

Defending the h3 square, on which Black threatens to give mate after ... Rxh4+.

34 ... Rxh4+!

Just the same! Black wins the queen with an unceasing attack.

35 gxh4 g3+ 36 Rxg3 Qxf1 37 Rg1 Qf3 38 fxg5 Nf4 39 Bxf4 Qxf4+ 40 Kh3 Bf3 41 Rf2

If 41 g6, then 41 ... Bg4+ 42

Kg2 Qf3+ and ... Qh3 mate.
41 ... Bg4+ 42 Kg2 Qe4+
Also ... Bh3+ led to a win.
43 Kh2 Qe3 44 Rgg2 d3 45 g6 Qxe5+ 46 Rg3 Qd4 47 Rfg2 Qf6
Gunsberg resigned on the 56th move, which he could have done much earlier.

Highly instructive is also the following game, in which Black's final attack rests upon the harmonious action of the queen and bishop.

Spanish Game
White: **V.John**
Black: **G.Suchting**
(Coburg 1904)
1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bb5 Nf6 4 0-0 Nxe4 5 Re1 Nd6 6 Bxc6 dxc6 7 Nxe5 Be7 8 Qe2 Be6 9 b3 0-0
This is either a sacrifice or a blunder of a pawn. One way or the other, Black obtains compensation in view of his better development and actively placed pieces.
10 Nxf7 Bxf7 11 Qxe7 Qc8
In view of the threat ... Re8, White has to lose time retreating his queen, whereas his queen's flank is frozen. The initiative is firmly placed in Black's hands.
12 Qg5
In its day, this game was subjected to numerous investigations but the commentators did not come to a united opinion in their evaluations and analyses. Here, for example, was recommended the retreat of the queen to h4, with reference to the variation 12 Qh4 Nf5 13 Qf4 Bd5 14 Bb2 Nd6 15 Qg5 Rf7 16 Nc3 - White has an extra pawn and the better position, concluded one of the commentators. This is right, perhaps, but in the given variation Black made a series of colourless moves - ... Bd5, ... Nd6 and to a certain extent even 12 ... Nf5 in so far as the knight returned to d6 a move later.
Meanwhile after 12 ... Re8, Black retains a dangerous initiative both in the event of 13 Rxe8+ Qxe8 14 Kf1 Qe5 15 Nc3 Re8 16 Bb2 Nb5 or 16 f3 Nf5, and on 13 Rf1 Re4.
The retreat of the queen to g5 has itself some point. Thus, in the variation 13 ... Re8 14 Rxe8+ Qxe8 15 Kf1, Black now does not have the move ... Qe5, while White threatens to play Bb2 with a gain of a tempo.
12 ... h6 13 Qg3 Nf5 14 Qc3 Re8 15 d3
On 15 Rf1, possible is 15 ... Bd5, and if 16 Bb2, then 16 ... Re2 with the threat ... Qe6-g6.
15 ... Nd4
This beautiful move met with universal approval. Nevertheless its quick success was conditioned by White's mistakes in defence. Undoubtedly, a more correct way to the goal is 15 ... Bd5 with the threat ... Nh4, against which there is apparently no good defence. If,

for example, 16 f3, then 16 ... Qd7 17 Bb2 Nd4 (or 17 ... Qf7 and then ... Qg6) 18 Rxe8+ Qxe8 19 Qd2 Nxc2.

16 Be3 Qg4 17 Bxd4?

This is the move which leads to a quick downfall. The only possibility of defence is 17 h3. Now 17 ... Nf3+ 18 Kf1 must be regarded as the strongest continuation, and Black apparently has to content himself with a draw by 18 ... Nh2+, since upon 18 ... Qh5 19 gxf3 Qxf3 20 Nd2 Qxh3+ 21 Ke2 Rxe3+ 22 fxe3 Bh5+ 23 Nf3, White is left with the exchange for a pawn, while his king takes refuge on b2. In his turn, White cannot avoid the draw by 19 Kg1 Nf3+ 20 Kh1, when 20 ... Qh5 21 gxf3 Qxf3+ 22 Kh2 (22 Kg1 Bd5 23 Kf1 Qg2+ 24 Ke2 Bf3+ 25 Kd2 Rxe3!) 22 ... Be6, and Black's attack can hardly be repulsed.

17 ... Bd5!

A crafty intermediate move. An immediate 17 ... Qxd4 would not be so decisive in view of 18 Rxe8+ Rxe8 19 h3!

18 g3 Qxd4!

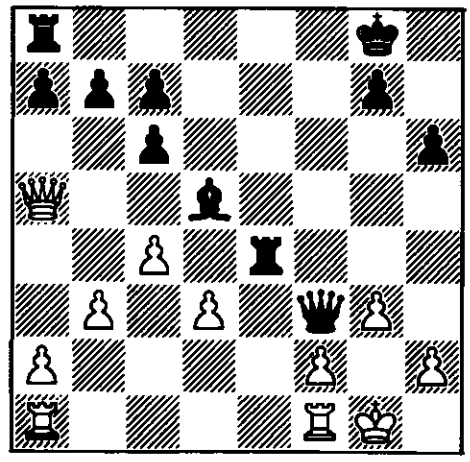
Not 18 ... Qf3 on account of 19 Re4.

19 Rf1 Qg4 20 Nd2 Re2 21 Ne4 Qf3 22 Qa5 Rxe4 23 c4

(see next diagram)

23 ... Rxc4! 0:1

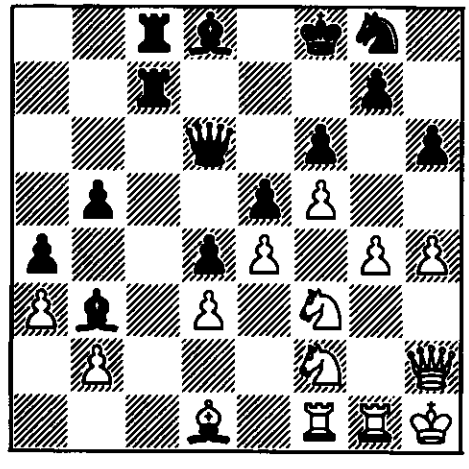
Despite the extraordinarily effective harmonious diagonal action of the queen and bishop in the examples given, open files, as lines



of invasion, play a considerably more significant role than open diagonals in the processes of the chess struggle. Files are arteries on which attacks are launched and heavy pieces penetrate into the opponent's position.

We give a characteristic position on this theme from the 4th game of the match **Chigorin-Tarrasch** (1893).

We take up the position after White's (Chigorin's) 40th move (40 Nf2).



On the board there is only one open c-file, which is under the control of the Black rooks. "Black occupies the open file" - this is how

the assessment of such positions usually begins. Black's last move was 39 ... Bb3. It is not difficult to guess the aim of this: it endeavours to secure for his rooks a square of invasion on c2, for which it is necessary to remove the enemy bishop, defending it from d1.

The capture of a line and an invasion on it into the opponent's camp often expresses itself by the obtaining of a decisive initiative; often, but not always. In the present position, for example, White has the possibility of opening the g-file on the king's flank by g5 and gxf6, while his heavy pieces are now ready to occupy this file and create threats to the enemy king. Admittedly, Black has a serious advantage in that he already occupies the c-file, whereas White must spend 3-4 moves in order to achieve the same in respect of the g-file. However, Black's attack is conducted at a considerable distance from the king's flank, while White creates dangerous threats to the king after the opening of the g-file. But can Black do much on the queen's flank during this time? In the best case - he will win the a3 and b2 pawns, but then he might forego the hope of achieving a decisive mating attack. In short, there is a hard battle in prospect.

The struggle developed in the following way:

40 ... Bxd1 41 Nxd1 Rc2

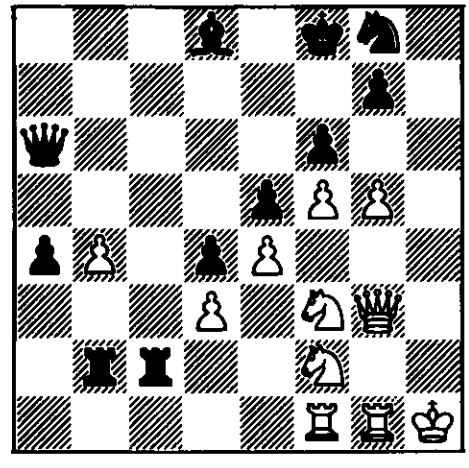
The invasion begins!

42 Qg3 b4 43 axb4 Qa6 44 Nf2

It is necessary to defend the d3 pawn. If at once 44 g5, then 44 ... hxg5 45 hxg5 Qxd3 46 gxf6 Bxf6 and White has to find new possibilities of attack, whereas Black controls the centre. On 44 Ne1 there is the strong reply 44 ... Rd2.

44 ... Rxb2 45 g5 hxg5 46 hxg5 Rcc2

Rooks doubled along the rank are a frequent and dangerous consequence of an invasion of heavy pieces down the file. We give consideration to the rook "storm" on the 7th (2nd) rank in the corresponding chapter, whereas here we confine ourselves to a diagram depicting this colourful position.



In the present case we deal with the "ready-made" open line where the Black rooks have already concentrated their strength for a jump inside the enemy fortress. In order to exploit the open file, it is necessary to firstly prepare the opening of it by a pawn exchange. In the game Chigorin-Tarrasch,

this opening occurred after ... c5-c4xd3.

Generally speaking, when including in one's plan the opening of a file, it is necessary to assess beforehand how the struggle with heavy pieces turns out on the exposed file.

A pawn exchange operation, conducted with the intention of opening a file, is an important stage of the struggle when carrying out a plan to open a line and invade on it with heavy pieces. This plan can be divided roughly into four parts: preparation for the pawn exchange; occupation of the file; invasion on it; realisation of the advantage of the invasion which has been carried out.

We will deal with this closely, in order to look at the great process of the planned struggle, where squares and lines are special purpose objects of the plan, where general methods of planning, the landmarks of which are concrete ideas, dynamic thoughts, harmonious action of forces, direct the thinking of the chessplayer to a purposeful form of activity.

However, beforehand, we want to acquaint the reader with ideas and thoughts about the plan by the founder of planning strategy in chess art, a great thinker and master of chess, the first world champion, Wilhelm Steinitz.

Chapter One

Two victories of Wilhelm Steinitz
The main points of his creativity and technique

In the present chapter, we present two games which brilliantly reflect the chess views of Steinitz - the first strategist-theoretician of the chess struggle. However we will deliberately illustrate the strategy of Steinitz, not on the substance of his theoretical reflections, which unfortunately sometimes bear a doctrinaire character, but on the basis of his practice, in the hope that the enormous creative canvas of the great master's chess thoughts will prompt the reader one more time to go deeply into the essence and details of the process of planning, to the investigation of which are devoted the following chapters of this book.

In both cases, Steinitz's opponent was Emanuel Lasker.

Spanish Game
White: **W.Steinitz**
Black: **Em.Lasker**
(2nd match game 1894)
1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bb5 Nf6 4 d3

Already this modest opening move hides within itself the grain of a great strategical plan, which is consistently and clearly realised both in the present game and in a number of other chess productions of Steinitz. The essence of it lies in the creation of a firm centre by the consolidation of the e4 pawn and the organisation, on this basis, of an energetic attack on the king's flank. For these objectives the queen's knight wends its way on the route-march Nd2-c4(f1)-e3-f5 - a manoeuvre which Steinitz worked out and introduced into widespread practice. Together with this, he sheltered the king on the queen's flank, but, in some cases, as for example in the present game, it remains in the centre.

Thus, these opening moves illustrate a definite purposefulness in Steinitz's thoughts, extending far beyond the bounds of the opening stage. Here Steinitz elucidated two important creative principles, which also guide present-day masters; it is necessary to prepare a flank attack by capture or firm consolidation of the centre; the basic middlegame plan should be laid already in the opening.

4 ... d6 5 c3 Bd7

By unpinning the knight and then developing the king's bishop on g7, Lasker, apparently, strives to create as much pressure as possible on the d4 point. However, Steinitz does not intend to start a

battle in the centre, and therefore the arrangement of forces intended by Lasker turns out to be insufficiently active.

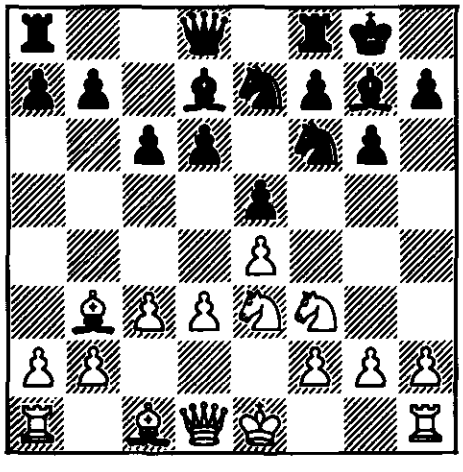
Meanwhile, four years later, in the match game Gunsberg-Chigorin, an interesting plan of defence was demonstrated for Black, consisting of a very quick preparation of the advance in the centre ... d5.

6 Ba4

The bishop is transferred to b3 for an attack on the king's flank, or to c2 with the aim of consolidating the centre.

6 ... g6 7 Nbd2 Bg7 8 Nc4 0-0 9 Ne3 Ne7 10 Bb3 c6

He has to spend a few more tempi to prepare the move ... d5, which serves as an introduction to operations in the centre. This allows Steinitz to immediately show his "cards".



11 h4!

This tactical method - the rook's pawn making very quick contact with the opponent's advanced knight's pawn, and thereby opening an attacking line against the king - is likewise one of the modern methods of operation.

Beginning with this move, Steinitz sets about realising the basic part of his plan - a direct attack on Black's castled position.

11 ... Qc7 12 Ng5

White threatens, after 13 h5 Nxh5, to sacrifice the exchange (14 Rxh5).

12 ... d5

Lasker likewise had within eyeshot the reply 12 ... h6, but he rejected it in view of the variation 13 g4 hxg5 14 hxg5 Nh7 15 Nf5 gxf5 16 gxf5 Nxf5 17 Qh5 etc. However, Black could successfully defend himself by 17 ... Nh6 18 gxh6 Bf6 19 Bg5! Qd8! (if N or Bxg5, then 20 Qg6+ with unavoidable mate on g7) 20 Rg1 Kh8. To be fair, one should add that on 12 ... h6 White could continue the attack by 13 Qf3. After 13 ... hxg5 14 hxg5 Nh7 (Nh5) arises an intricate position, requiring great inventiveness and lofty technique in the conduct of attack and defence. In any case, neither Lasker nor Steinitz were in a position to envisage all of the many variations over the board.

In the first period of his chess career, Lasker avoided those continuations where it was not possible to control events. Steinitz, however, was far more willing to take risks, particularly when through risks he could to some extent expound his positional principles.

The whole question of to what extent one can take risks, on the basis of a general evaluation of a position, remains unsolved from Steinitz to the present day.

13 f3! Rad8 14 g4! dxe4

Now 14 ... h6 already does not create serious complications for White in view of 15 Qe2 hxg5 16 hxg5 Nh7 (or 16 ... Ne8 17 Qh2 f6 18 exd5 cxd5 19 Nxd5 Nxd5 20 Bxd5+ Rf7 21 Qh7+ Kf8 22 Qxg6 Bc6 23 Qxf7+ Qxf7 24 Bxf7 Kxf7 25 Ke2, and White has rook and three pawns for bishop and knight) 17 Nf5 gxf5 18 Qh2 Re8 19 Qxh7+ Kf8 20 gxf5 and White has an irresistible attack.

15 fxe4 h6

All the same, Lasker has to resort to this move. White threatened, besides a direct attack with the moves Qf3 or h5, to castle queen's side after Qe2 and Bd2 and introduce the queen's rook into battle. And yet the way chosen by Lasker does not achieve its aim, while the position of the Black king proves to be compromised. More difficulties were created for the opponent by 15 ... Qc8, attacking the g4 pawn for a third time, and if 16 Rg1, then now 16 ... h6. To back up the attack, White would have to sacrifice both knights: 17 Qf3 hxg5 18 hxg5 Nh7 19 Nf5! gxf5 20 gxf5 Nxf5 21 exf5 Bxf5 22 g6 Nf6 23 gxf7+ Rxf7 (worse is 23 ... Kh8 24 Qg3) 24 Bh6 Ne8 (24 ... Be6 is not possible, in view of 25 Rxg7+ Rxg7 26 Qxf6) 25 Bxf7+ Kxf7 26 Qh5+ Kg8 27 0-0-0. White, with the threat of an exchange sacrifice on g7 and also the moves Rg5 or Rdf1, creates a dangerous attack.

16 Qf3! Be8

The knight, as before, cannot be taken, since after 16 ... hxg5 17 hxg5 Nh7 18 Nf5! gxf5 19 Qh3 Re8 20 Qxh7+ Kf8 21 gxf5, Black might as well resign.

17 Bc2 Nd7 18 Nh3

A judicious retreat, in which, however, is also contained an idea of a further development of the attack.

18 ... Nc5 19 Nf2

White's last move, leading to a consolidation of the d3 point, bears witness to Steinitz's strict adherence to the principle formulated by him, which states that a flank attack can only succeed with a firm centre.

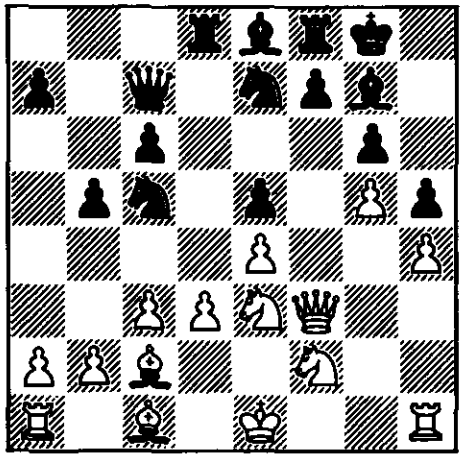
In this plan, the range of activity of the White pieces is interesting. Only three moves ago, his bishop, placed on b3, and the knight on g5 were spearheaded against the f7 point. Now they switch over completely to carrying out a defensive function. Great flexibility in manoeuvering with the pieces was a characteristic trait of Steinitz's play. Together with this, it cannot but be noticed that Steinitz retains an attacking position on the king's flank and, as further events prove, he even decides to launch an attack without mobilising his reserves on the

queen's flank. After Lasker's next move he just avoids introducing these reserves into battle.

19 ... b5

A very cunning idea, pursuing the idea of creating a counter-attack in the centre and on the queen's flank, and reckoning on the natural 20 Bd2; in this case would have followed 20 ... b4 21 cxb4 (or 21 0-0-0 bxc3 22 bxc3 Rb8 with initiative on the queen's flank) 21 ... Ne6! 22 Bc3 c5 23 bxc5 Nc6! or 23 b5 Nd4 completely refuting White's plan. Steinitz unravels Lasker's idea and immediately throws himself into an attack, at the basis of which lies a bold, beautiful sacrifice of a knight.

20 g5 h5



21 Nf5! gxf5

Now he has to take the knight, since passive defence holds out no hopes at all. Out of active moves, besides accepting the sacrifice, Black had available only 21 ... f6, but this reply is not possible: 22 Nxg7 Kxg7 (22 ... fxg5 23 Nxe8) 23 gxf6+ Rxf6 24 Bh6+ Kf7 25 Qe3 and Black's position is bad.

22 exf5 f6 23 g6 Nxg6

Obviously forced, in view of the threat Qxh5. As a result of the first "bloodshed" Black has gained a pawn. But on the board has appeared an open g-file, which White will control. And the g-file is a direct path leading to the "palace" of the king itself. Here, it is precisely this circumstance which is particularly threatening for Black.

24 fxg6 Bxg6 25 Rg1

How does Black now defend himself? On the retreat of the bishop follows 26 Bh6, on 25 ... Kh7 - 26 Rxg6 followed by d4+. If, for example, 25 ... Qf7, then 26 Qg3 Bh7 27 Bh6 Rd7 (27 ... Ne6 28 Bb3) 28 Bxg7 Qxg7 29 Qh2 Bg6 30 d4 with material gain.

25 ... e4

An interesting attempt to save the position was 25 ... Bxd3! (in his day, Chigorin drew attention to this move).

In the event of 26 Bxd3 Rxd3! 27 Nxd3 e4 28 Qxh5 Nxd3+, Black has good chances of at least a draw. If, on 25 ... Bxd3, White replies 26 Bh6, then 26 ... Rf7 27 Bxg7 Rxg7 28 0-0-0 Bxc2, and White does not succeed in extracting anything from the exposed position of the Black king.

After missing this possibility, the existence of which bears witness to the complexity of the course of the struggle, Lasker

suffers material loss, after which the struggle, to a large extent, transfers to a technical phase.

26 dxe4 Kh7

Or 26 ... Qf7 27 b4 Ne6 28 Bb3 Rfe8 29 Nh3 with the invasion of the knight on f4.

27 Rxg6! Kxg6 28 Qf5+ Kf7 29 Qxh5+ Kg8 30 Qxc5

White not only has a bishop, knight and pawn for the rook, which in itself is sufficient for victory, but also creates direct threats. His two bishops are operating very powerfully. Now the murderous 31 Bb3+ is threatened.

30 ... Qe5 31 Be3 a6 32 a4

Introducing the queen's-side reserves into the battle immediately decides the game.

32 ... Rfe8 33 axb5 axb5 34 Qxe5 Rxe5 35 Ra6

Invasion! It is curious that the energetic introduction of the rook on a6 is its first and last action in this game. One move only! The rook paralyses the opponent's forces and thereby proves to be a powerful support for the concluding attack of White's minor pieces. It is interesting that also his king's rook makes in all only two moves - Rg1xg6.

Minimum strength, maximum achievement! - this is the principle of economy which time and again Steinitz spoke about in his theoretical works and which he demonstrated many times in his own games.

35 ... Rc8 36 Ng4 Re7 37 Bc5 Ree8 38 Ne3 Bf8 39 Bd4 Kf7 40 h5 Be7 41 Bb3+ Kf8 42 Nf5

In conclusion, the "eternal knight" appears on the scene, under the cover of which, and with the assistance of the excellently placed bishop, a free way is opened for the h-pawn to the cherished h8 square. Therefore

1:0

Queen's Gambit
White: **W.Steinitz**
Black: **Em.Lasker**
(Petersburg 1895/96)

1 d4

Steinitz inflicted a great many defeats on his contemporaries with this opening. This, of course, was not due to the first move itself, but to those well-composed, purposeful plans which Steinitz persistently and logically carried out in this opening.

1 ... d5 2 c4 e6 3 Nc3 Nf6 4 Bf4

Steinitz also played here 4 Bg5 - a move which he employed as far back as 1873 at the international tournament in Vienna, against Anderssen.

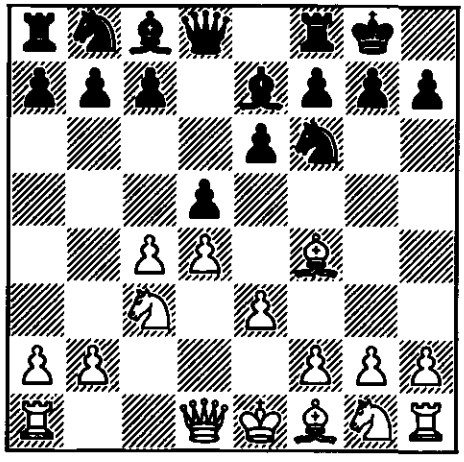
4 ... Be7

A colourless reply, ignoring the opponent's plan and allowing White, as also occurred in the previous game, to create a firm centre and then launch an energetic attack on the flank.

Meanwhile, Black had at least two active retorts to Steinitz's plan - an immediate ... c5, to under-

mine White's influence over the e5 point, and also the well-known attack on the c3 point by ... c6, ... Qa5, and ... Bb4, figuring in opening theory under the name of the Cambridge Springs system and gaining even more in strength with the position of the bishop on f4 (instead of g5).

5 e3 0-0



6 c5!

White's plan, based on the move 4 Bf4, turns out to be quite distinct. He prevents the counter-attack ... c5 and sets up a solid formation in the centre.

In advancing the pawn to c5, Steinitz had to carefully weigh up the opponent's undermining moves ... b6 or ... e5. He was probably convinced of the variation 6 ... b6 7 b4 a5 8 a3, and Black does not succeed in loosening the advanced post at c5.

6 ... Ne4

With the threat, in the event of 7 Nf3 and 7 Bd3, to exchange on c3 and then already to begin undermining play by ... b6. If, however, White himself exchanges on e4, then Black prevents the development of White's knight on f3 and thereby weakens his pressure on the e5 point. And yet Lasker's consideration is not particularly far-sighted. Black's pawn, transferring to e4, becomes the object of the break f3. Besides this, the c4 square is freed for the White bishop, where it takes up a handy position for attack.

Black should concentrate his attention on the central e5 point. For this purpose it was necessary to play 6 ... c6, in order to prepare the development of the queen's knight on d7 (if at once 6 ... Nbd7 7 Nb5 forces the retreat of the other knight to e8). The game might develop like this: 6 ... c6 7 Nf3 Nbd7 8 Bd3 Nh5, and then, depending on the circumstances, ... f5 or ... Nxf4.

7 Nxe4 dxe4 8 Qc2 f5 9 Bc4 Nc6 10 a3

Side by side with the purposeful carrying out of a main line of a plan, White displays healthy foresight. Black threatened to render harmless the menacing bishop with the move ... Na5, on which now follows 11 Ba2.

10 ... Bf6 11 0-0-0 Kh8

This and the following move serve as preparation for the advance ... e5. Only in this way can he do something against the break f3.

12 f3 Qe7!

Very cleverly played and setting White a serious problem. On 13

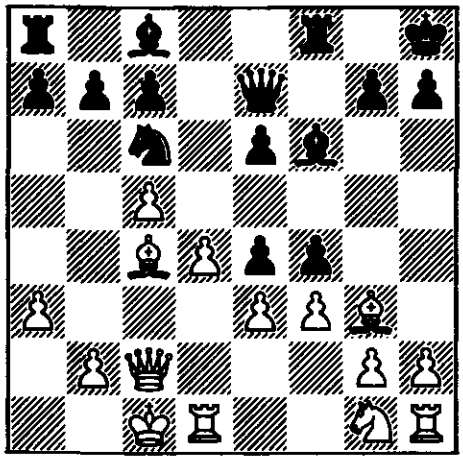
fxe4 follows 13 ... e5 and if 14 d5 then 14 ... exf4 15 dxc6 Qxc5 and Black already has the initiative.

13 Bg3

So as on 13 ... e5 to rejoin 14 d5 Na5 15 Ba2.

13 ... f4

This advance looks promising. Thus, if 14 Bxf4, then 14 ... e5 15 dxe5 Nxe5 16 Qxe4 Bf5! 17 Qxf5 Nxc4 with a winning attack; however, Steinitz has prepared a surprise for his opponent.



14 Qxe4!

A beautiful sacrifice which Black is forced to accept. White gets two pawns for the bishop, retains control of the centre, in view of the inviolable, solid eight-pawn chain, and, principally, obtains a very dangerous attack on the opponent's king in connection with the open h-file.

14 ... fxg3 15 hxg3 g6

Black, with a view to defence, decides to give up another pawn. Actually, on 15 ... h6, follows 16 Bd3 or 16 f4 Bd7 17 Nf3 and then g4. Also unsatisfactory is 15 ... g5. In this case Steinitz, in his own words, intended to play 16 f4 g4 17 Ne2 Bd7 18 Qc2 with the threat e4-e5. Also the doubling of rooks on the h-file would be threatened.

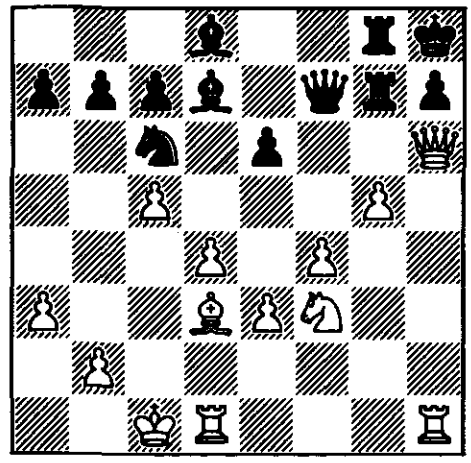
16 Qxg6 Bd7

16 ... e5 is bad because of d5-d6.

17 f4 Rf7 18 g4 Rg7 19 Qh6 Rxg4 20 Bd3 Rg7 21 Nf3 Qf7 22 g4 Rag8

Black could not take the pawn, since after 23 Qxh7+ he loses the bishop on d7.

23 g5 Bd8



24 Rh2!

This is considerably stronger than the win of the exchange by 24 g6. The threat Rdh1 is irresistible.

24 ... Rg6 25 Qh5 R6g7 26 Rdh1 Qxh5 27 Rxh5 Rf8 28 Rxh7+ Rxh7

Or 28 ... Kg8 29 Rxg7+ Kxg7 30 Rxh7+ and the bishop on d7 is lost.

29 Rxh7+ Kg8 30 Rxd7 Rf7 31 Bc4! 1:0

In view of the loss of a fourth pawn after 31 ... Rxd7 32 Bxe6+ Rf7 33 g6.

The whole game might serve as

an example of a concrete plan and harmony of active forces (attack on the h7 point).

Both games are distinguished by clear, purposeful thoughts. In them, Steinitz's play speaks for itself. Nevertheless, in concluding this opening chapter, we wish to recall the skill with which Steinitz handled the pawns, and how economically he expended the energy of his pieces.

Minimum effort with maximum achievement! Repeating this creative slogan of Steinitz in planning a game, despite the passage of time one can say that even nowadays it is written on the creative banner of chess art.

Steinitz's handbook *The Modern Chess Instructor* gives us an interesting statement about pawns:

"The skilful handling of pawns constitutes one of the most important methods of activity in the chess struggle. The loss of a pawn, in the majority of cases, is fatal if it is not compensated by a strong and in any case better arrangement of pieces than the opponent. Not only the weakness of pawns, but also the weakness of squares on which enemy pieces can be placed, frequently entails loss. Only the ability to handle the pawns can avert such favourable positional features for the opponent."

There is no need to discuss this thought, which is so in keeping with our times.

Chapter Two

Stages of the Plan

Squares and lines as special purpose objects of the plan. The preparatory stage. Concrete definition of a position. Realisation of successes achieved

Every plan can usually be subdivided into several consecutive stages, ensuing one after the other. A single great plan can be broken up, as it were, into several small plans with their own objectives and ways of achieving them. It also happens that a course of events forces one of the opponents, and sometimes even both, to radically change their ideas.

As an example, we try to draw, at present in outline, a picture of the carrying out of a three stage plan.

In the first stage of the struggle, one has to create an object for a creative plan. This stage is characterised by the lack of a concrete objective and is such (for example, by provoking the advance of some of the opponent's pawns) that it bears a particular, one could say narrow-tactical character. In this part of the plan the opponents have to be guided by general considerations, based on fundamental positional principles of play. The task of both sides is to create weak squares in the opponent's camp and, if the opportunity presents itself, weak points. At the same time, it is necessary to counteract the opponent's carrying out of the same task. Thus, at the first stage of the opponent's plan, side by side with active operations, he must also take prophylactic measures against the weakening of his own position.

In the second stage, the planned objective comes to light. The way to achieving the objective becomes all the more clear. The concrete definition of the game reaches great depth.

If an objective is achieved, one of the sides transfers the struggle to the third stage, which proceeds under the heading of realisation of the advantage achieved. This stage might be called technical, but only to a certain extent, since in it is frequently required the ability to employ methods ensuing from theoretical laws and rules.

The opening stage represents a component part of the first stage. In several openings, particularly in gambits, the process of the struggle could be taken as also being the second stage of the plan. In a single plan, there might be not only three, but also four, five and

even more stages. On the other hand, practice knows also one-stage plans. These are most often met in games where incomplete plans occur, where conditions change, and that is why separate parts of the game turn out to have no logical connection with each other.

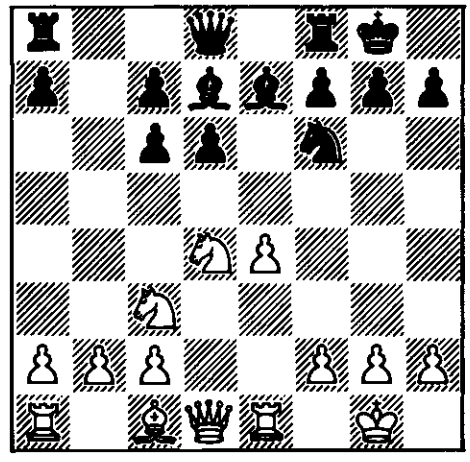
We devote the present chapter to plans in which weak squares and open lines serve as the main purposeful objective.

In accordance with this statement, the plan, with these objectives in view, can be sub-divided into the following stages:
1: the struggle for the creation of weak squares (or open lines)
2: the struggle for the capture (occupation) of weak squares or lines
3: the realisation of the advantage ensuing from the occupation of weak squares or open lines.

We begin with a game played as far back as the Petersburg tournament of 1909.

Spanish Game
White: **R.Teichman**
Black: **O.Bernstein**
1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Nc3 Nf6 4 Bb5 d6 5 d4 Bd7 6 0-0 Be7 7 Re1 exd4

It has been well known since the time of the game Tarrasch-Marco (Dresden 1892) that castling for Black, at the present moment, entails the loss of a pawn after 8 Bxc6 Bxc6 9 dxe5 dxe5 10 Qxd8 Raxd8 11 Nxe5, since 11 ... Bxe4 12 Nxe4 Nxe4 is not possible because of 13 Nd3.
8 Nxd4 0-0 9 Bxc6 bxc6



This position can rightfully be called a theoretical opening. It has been met in practice hundreds of times and even important authorities diverge in their opinions when evaluating it. Em. Lasker frequently and with great success employed this variation for Black. However, many people reckoned that the presence of the central advanced e-pawn for White, some advantage in space, and finally a certain weakness of the Black pawns on the queen's flank which might play a role in the endgame - all this makes White's chances more promising.

The diagrammed position is the intitial point of planning for both opponents. White sets his sights on the advance e5. There were even attempts to make this at once, but it became clear that, after 10 e5 dxe5 11 Rxe5 Bd6, the position of Black's pieces is improved, while White loses part of

his achievement in the centre. Therefore the move e5 requires preparation. Black's task consists of preventing, in every possible way, the advance of the e-pawn. To achieve this, it is necessary for him to create strong pressure on the e5 point. At the same time, Black could make some demonstration on the open b-file, so as not to allow White to wholly concentrate on operations in the centre.

10 b3

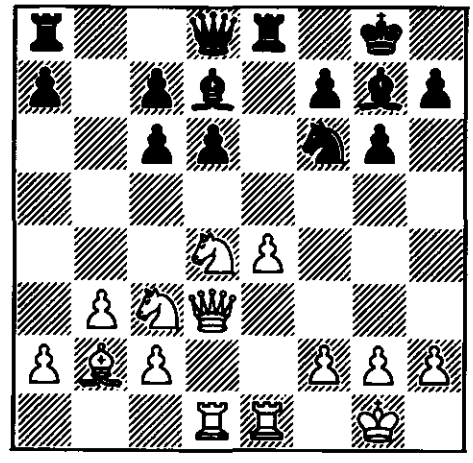
One could qualify this move as tactical, bearing the incidental character of an oversight. It is interesting that this "mistake" (possibly too strong a term for the present case) was made three years before the present game in the encounter Forgacs-Wolf (Nürnberg 1906).

The move 10 b3 is acceptable as a link in the plan to increase White's influence over the e5 square, but this objective is better served by 10 Bf4. The fact of the matter is that, after the advance of the White pawn to b3, the possibility appears for Black of the pawn march ...a5-a4 and, on this basis, an overall offensive develops on the queen's flank. This offensive would look quite logical after the transfer of the bishop from e7 to g7, where it will hold up the advance e5 and, together with this, support Black's attack on the a- and b-files from a distance.

10 ... Re8

Black is carried away with his plan and does not notice the possibility which has turned up to immediately seize the initiative. In the above-mentioned game, Wolf played 10 ... d5! and on 11 e5 Bb4! 12 Bd2 Ng4 with the threats of ... Qh4 and ... Bc5.

11 Bb2 Bf8 12 Qd3 g6 13 Rad1 Bg7



This position poses White a number of difficult problems.

Black has created such a solid defensive line that it is very difficult for White to march through the frontier e4-e5, and without this his heavy pieces, huddled together at the rear, are doomed to inactivity. Therefore he ought to have persistently strived to carry out his plan, that is the struggle for the e5 square with the aim of achieving the advance of his central pawn. The more consistent 14 f4 kept the initiative in White's hands. Teichmann, however, does not belong to those chessplayers who are inclined to take if only small risks in the game, and will not be forced into this. The move f4, as it seems, exposes the king's

position, allows the attacking reply ... Nh5, weakens the e4 point, and in the end does not guarantee the move e4-e5. These considerations induce Teichmann to switch to defensive tactics, which lead to a further consolidation of the centre and organisation of a defence on the queen's flank.

14 f3

With this apparently modest move, White renders harmless the thrust ... Nh5, which, in conjunction with a future ... Be5 and ... Qh4, might be the beginning of a direct attack on the king's flank. For example, 14 ... Nh5 15 Bc1 (also possible is 15 Nde2 Qh4 16 Na4) 15 ... Be5 16 Nde2 Qh4 17 f4! Nxf4 18 Bxf4 Bxf4 19 g3 with the win of a piece.

Therefore Black commences a plan of attack on the queen's flank.

14 ... Qb8 15 Bc1

Retreat! Teichmann realises his operation with 10 b3 is a failure. In the general "orchestra" of White pieces, the role of the bishop on b2 turns out to be worthless - and Teichmann transfers it to e3, so that it can take part in the forthcoming events.

15 ... Qb6 16 Na4

On an immediate 16 Be3 would have followed 16 ... c5 17 Nde2 a5.

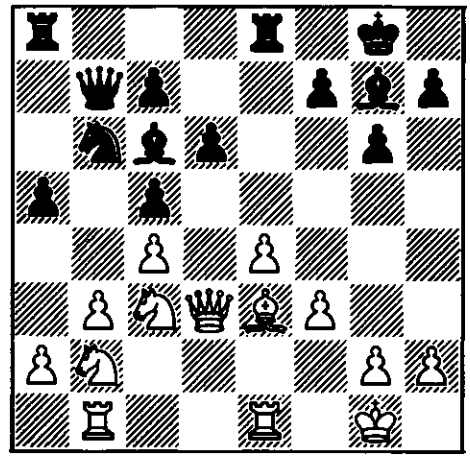
16 ... Qb7 17 Nb2 c5 18 Ne2 Bb5

This can be called an "intermediate" move. Before placing the bishop on the position destined for it in the plan (c6), Black considers it is useful to provoke the move c4. Why is this necessary? Black intends to organise an attack on the b3 pawn by ... a5-a4, and for this it is very important to deprive it of the defence of the c2 pawn.

19 c4 Bc6 20 Nc3

As far as it is possible, White blockades the a4 point, and envisages the advance of the a-pawn. A battle also begins to develop around this point, in which the attacking side is Black, who seized the initiative after the 14th move.

20 ... Nd7 21 Be3 Nb6 21 Rb1 a5



23 Bf2!

A deeply planned move, the aim of which is not discovered by the opponent. As will be seen later, it in fact prevents the immediate advance of the Black a-pawn. The Black queen finds itself in unpleasant opposition to the White rook, and if he intends to continue the attack on the queen's flank then it would be useful for him to take the

queen away from the b-file to c8 or a6.

23 ... a4?

This move is mistaken. Admittedly, the pawn is recovered by force, which, of course, was foreseen by Bernstein; but he does not take into account that it is won back at the cost ... of the game. The conclusion is clear - a too direct carrying out of the plan can, despite a correct idea, lead to a deplorable result.

24 Nbxa4 Nxa4

This is also an unconsidered move. Better was 24 ... Bxa4 25 bxa4 Qc6; though even in this case the initiative passes to White after 26 Bh4 Nxa4 27 Nd5.

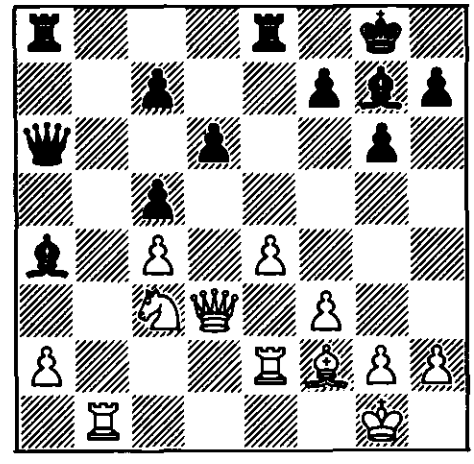
25 bxa4 Qa6 26 Re2

Again an outwardly modest move, but essentially it serves as preparation for a powerful plan of attack on the king's flank. The move is useful from various points of view: for the doubling of rooks on the open b-file, freeing a square on e1 for the bishop, and, in addition, the defence of the a2 pawn. The main (planned!) objective, however, only comes to light three moves later.

26 ... Bxa4

From the 23rd move Black goes downhill. He grabs the "poor" pawn, not foreseeing the immediate punishment. A not very pleasant, but all the same lesser evil, was 26 ... Bxc3. However, the best defence should be regarded as 26 ... Qc8 and then ... Qd7 or ... Qe6, placing the queen in the centre and, together with this, retaining hopes of play on the a-file. In any case, no way can the White knight be allowed to d5, and that with tempo (i.e. with the creation of threats).

It is useful to note here that in the chess struggle, as also in life, after going astray it is not easy to retain self-control and, without losing one's presence of mind, begin a search for new paths in unfavourable conditions. Often we see how a chessplayer, after making a mistake and losing his train of thought, excited, perturbed, vexed, begins to play badly and exacerbates his difficulties. The impression of Black's moves in this game, after the mistaken advance ... a4, is one of annoyance and irritation.



27 Nd5!

The beginning of a plan of attack, brilliantly carried through to the end over the course of 20 moves and completed with a mating set-up.

Now White has a direct threat

of Nxc7 but the aim of the attack is not just this. The object of the attack is the weakened f6 square, for the control of which the struggle now begins.

White's plan can be broken up into three stages. The first - exchange of the bishop which is the main defender of the f6 point; the second - attack of the f6 square and invasion on it; the third - realisation of the invasion. All the elements of the general methods of planning - concrete ideas, dynamic play, harmony of forces - are boldly reflected in the course of the fulfilment of the plan.

27 ... Ra7 28 Bh4

This is why White played Bf2 on the 23rd move. A move later, the planned basis of 26 Re2 is also revealed. Black cannot ignore the threat of Nf6+ or Bf6 and sets about the defence of the vulnerable point in his castled position - the f6 point.

The continuation 28 ... Re6 will clearly not do in view of 29 Rb8+ (Black opened the b-file, but White creates the threats on it). After 28 ... c6 29 Nf6+ Bxf6 30 Bxf6 Rd7 31 Qe3, the threat Qh6 leads to Black's immediate downfall. There remains only one possibility.

28 ... Bd4+ 29 Kh1 Kg7 30 Bf2!

This forces the exchange of the bishop, since on 30 ... Be5 follows 31 f4, while after 30 ... Bf6 31 Nxf6 Kxf6 32 Bh4+ Black has a miserable position. The role of the White rook on e2 is now clear. Namely, it guarantees White the exchange of bishops.

30 ... Bxf2 31 Rxf2

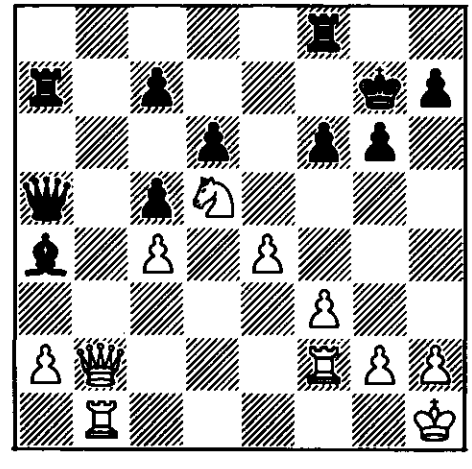
Threatening a check on c3. The second stage of the plan begins - the struggle to invade with the knight on the weak f6 square. Realising that the surrender of this square is "just like death", Black makes heroic efforts to defend it, but after the exchange of bishops, he has insufficient forces for this.

31 ... Qa5 32 Qe2!

Once again, threatening a diagonal check, this time from b2.

32 ... f6 33 Qb2 Rf8

Black needs only one tempo to save himself. If it were now his turn to move, he would have played 33 ... c6, repulsing the attack on the f6 point. But alas he does not have this tempo and the game is decided. White's threats, following one after the other, do not give Black a respite for a moment.



34 g4!

Threatening 35 Nxf6. Black can

postpone the fall of the f6 point only by three moves.

34 ... h6 35 h4 g5 36 f4! gxh4 37 Nxf6

And so the invasion takes place, after which the second stage of the plan can be considered completed.

The third, concluding stage, will consist of the realisation of the advantage which has been achieved by the invasion of the knight on f6. The position of the Black king is utterly ruined and his main forces find themselves on the other flank and unable to get over in time to the defence.

In the meanwhile, White's threats are already impending. Now 38 Nh5+ Kf7 39 Qf6+ and Rb8+ is threatened.

37 ... Rf7 38 g5

Now the g-file is opened and the rook is introduced into the attack.

38 ... Bc6 39 Rg1 Qa3 40 gxh6+ Kxh6 41 Rh2! Bxe4

The sacrifice of a piece is the only defence against mate (if 41 ... Qf3+, then 42 Qg2). White's positional advantage increases to material gain. The agony does not last long.

42 Nxe4 Qf3+ 43 Qg2 Qxg2+ 44 Rhxg2 Rxf4 45 Rg6+ Kh7 46 Nf6+ 1:0

Spanish Game
White: **Y.Vilner**
Black: **P.Romanovsky**
(3rd USSR Championship 1924)

1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bb5 d6 4 d4 Bd7 5 Nc3 Nge7

Steinitz played this sometimes, though Black, with this move, delays the development of the king's flank by one tempo. Besides this, the knight does not have such a range of activity from e7 (particularly in the struggle for the centre), as from f6.

For all that, what attracted Steinitz to this move? The idea of it consists of the attempt to consolidate the e5 point after ... Ng6, which, on 5 ... Nf6 6 0-0 Be7 7 Re1 is deprived of pawn support and Black has to exchange ... exd4. For quite a long time, theoretical authorities, including also Steinitz, treated this exchange as a surrender of the centre. The move 5 ... Nge7 was one of Steinitz's numerous experiments.

6 Bg5

Chigorin played this against Steinitz in the 11th game of the return match in 1892. Lasker, in several match encounters with Steinitz, continued 6 Bc4 with the threat Ng5. Vilner's opponent in the present game (he is the author of this book) intended, on 6 Bc4, to put Chigorin's recommendation to the test and reply 6 ... Na5.

6 ... h6

Steinitz played here 6 ... f6 7 Be3 Ng6. In the present game, Black, without going into analysis of concrete variations, feared, after 6 ... f6, letting the opponent have the open a2-g8 diagonal, on which the bishop might be consolidated after 7 Be3 Ng6 8 a3!? However, in

the event of an exchange of the white-squared bishops by 8 ... Nxd4, a weak square is created for Black on e6. And yet, upon the experimental system chosen by Black, it was necessary to think more boldly and concretely. The proverb "the sheep is safe when the wolf has had its fill" cannot be assumed as a basis for the chess plan.

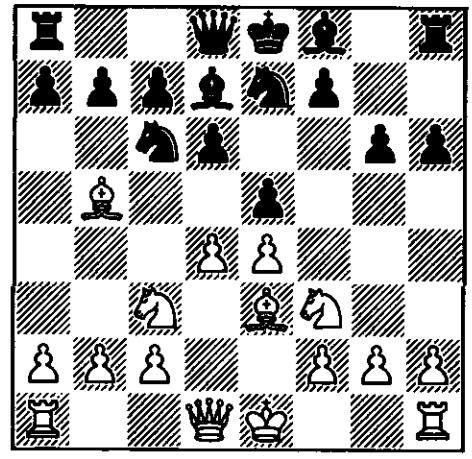
7 Be3

The apparently more logical 7 Bh4 surprisingly leads to difficulties with the defence of the d4 pawn after 7 ... g5 8 Bg3 (not 8 Nxg5 Ng6!) 8 ... g4. White would have to go in for 9 Bxc6 Nxc6 10 d5 gxf3 11 dxc6 Bxc6 12 Qxf3, which would have given Black a good game after 12 ... Qg5 or h5. It is interesting that Vilner feared not 7 ... g5, but the variation 7 ... Nxd4 8 Nxd4 exd4 9 Qxd4 Bxb5 10 Nxb5 Nc6! 11 Bxd8 Nxd4 12 Nxd4 Rxd8. Undoubtedly, this also eases Black's position.

In planning a game, one often has to consider quite a few concrete continuations, justifying or refuting this or that idea.

7 ... g6

An incorrect scheme, which is not in accordance with the idea of the development of the knight on e7. He should strengthen the e5 point, by playing ... Ng6, and quickly complete his development (Be7, 0-0). The invasion of the White knight on d5 does not promise him anything real, and he



could hardly hold his ground on this square.

8 dxe5!

The beginning of a plan which is very dangerous for Black. White has an advantage in development and he intends to exploit it by opening the d-file. If he replies 8 ... dxe5, the king's bishop on g7 will be doomed to inactivity; however, in the event of 8 ... Nxe5, White is prepared to content himself with the continuation 9 Nxe5 dxe5 (9 ... Bxb5? 10 Ng4) 10 Bxd7+ (10 Qe2 is also not bad) 10 ... Qxd7 11 Qxd7+ Kxd7 12 0-0-0+ Kc6 13 Rd3 Bg7 14 Rhd1 with an indisputable advantage.

8 ... dxe5

Black chooses the lesser of two evils and strives to create a complicated situation in the forthcoming difficult struggle.

9 Qd2

White's plan consists of controlling the d-file after 0-0-0. At the same time he wants to make it difficult for the opponent to castle. Nevertheless the queen move does not take into account, sufficiently concretely, the immediate course

of events, and already a move later he has to transfer it to e2. It was better to do this at once, postponing the operation of the heavy pieces on the d-file until he has castled queen's side.

9 ... Bg7 10 0-0-0 Bg4 11 Qe2

On 11 Nd5 Black has the adequate defence 11 ... a6. White prefers to carry out his planned line, reconciling himself to a loss of tempo.

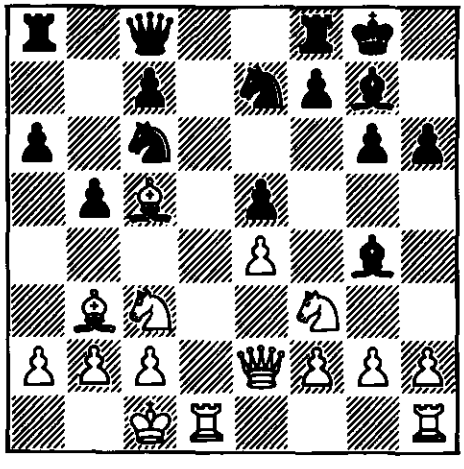
11 ... Qc8 12 Bc5 a6

He must defend himself against 13 Bxe7, on which now follows 13 ... axb5.

13 Ba4

White would also retain the better position after Bxc6+ but this would somewhat relax the tension. Black would probably have replied 13 ... bxc6.

13 ... b5 14 Bb3 0-0



15 Nd5!

This move gives the advantage to White, who gets the chance to start an attack on the king's flank.

15 ... Re8 16 h3 Be6 17 Qd2

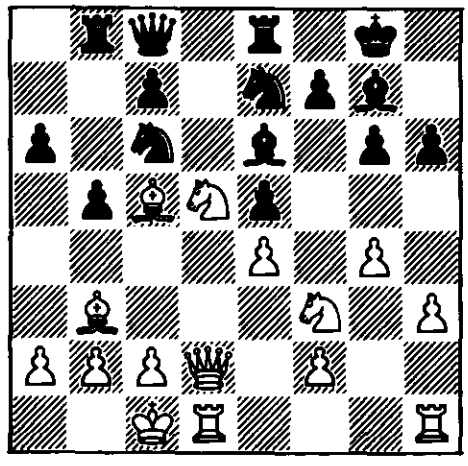
Played with the aim of preventing tactical possibilities connected with the opposition of the queen and Black rook on e8. These possibilities actually arise after 17 ... Bxd5 18 exd5 Na5 or 18 Bxd5 Nxd5 19 exd5 Na5 (Nd4).

There was, however, a more consistent way for White to occupy the d-file - 17 Nxe7+ Nxe7 18 Rd3, with a subsequent build-up of heavy pieces on the d-file.

17 ... Rb8

The aim of this move consists of the preparation of an attack on the b2 point. Black intends to furthermore play ... a5, provoking the move a4, opening the b-file by an exchange on a4 and then attempting to include the bishop on g7 in the game. All this - is a rather hazy expectation, but it does cause White some concern.

18 g4



White is not afraid of ghosts. There is a sense of courage and belief in the correctness of his plan from his attacking moves. He now threatens to make decisive progress after g5 followed by Nf6+.

18 ... a5!

Black sacrifices a pawn in the hope of enlivening his pieces somewhat, and principally with the aim of distracting the opponent from carrying out his plan.

19 g5

How strange it should be that this attack is not so threatening. White should not refuse the gift (19 Nxe7+ Nxe7 20 Qxa5), though, after 20 ... Bxb3 21 cxb3 (dangerous is 21 axb3 Nc6 22 Qc3 Ra8 with an initiative for the pawn) 21 ... Nc6 (worse is 21 ... Ra8 22 Qxb5 Rxa2 23 Ba3) 22 Qc3 Qe6, it would be very difficult to realise the extra pawn.

19 ... Bxd5

Of course, the check on f6 cannot be allowed.

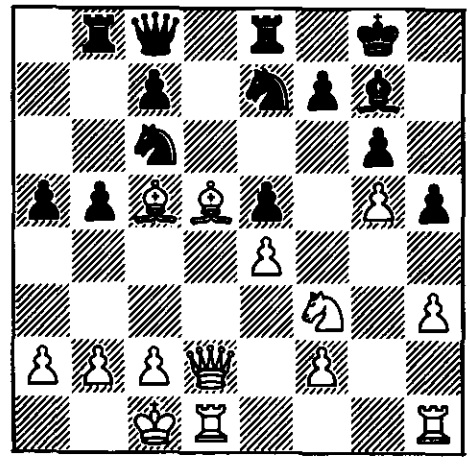
20 Bxd5

It is hard to decide whether it was better to play 20 exd5 a4 21 dxc6 (an interesting variation is 21 gxh6 axb3 22 hxg7 bxa2 23 Qh6 a1Q+ 24 Kd2 Qxd1+ 25 Rxd1 f6 - White has no attack and is a rook down) 21 ... axb3 22 axb3 Nf5!; Black gets a promising game for the pawn.

20 ... h5

After this move, locking the king's flank, White's attack comes to an end.

The conditions of the struggle have changed radically. White has not managed to carry out his plan; Black has rid himself of the troubles which have burdened him as a result of a badly played opening. The partners must look afresh at the position created and consider new plans, spend time calculating possible variations.



The first question: can White, just like a few moves ago, win a pawn by continuing 21 Bxe7 Nxe7 22 Qxa5? No, he cannot. There follows 22 ... Nxd5 23 Rxd5 (even worse is 23 exd5 Qf5!) 23 ... Ra8 and 24 Qxb5 is not possible in view of 24 ... c6, while, on 24 Qe3, Black simply takes the a2 pawn.

The second question: what should White do and is he threatened with anything from the opponent's side?

There are no direct threats from Black, but on the whole his forces are more actively posted than White's. The advance of Black's pawn group on the queen's flank might serve as a motive for the creation of a plan, aimed at the exposed position of the enemy king. Also possible is the idea of playing ... a4 and ... Nd8, threatening to win the bishop after ... c6. Finally, Black could improve

the position of his pieces by playing ... Qa6 and ... Rbd8. Besides this, White must watch out for the capture ... Nxd5, since in the event of exd5 the bishop g7 is re-animated (... e4), while after Qxd5 and the reply ... Qb7 the White queen's forward position does not turn out to be particularly good.

All these considerations have clearly relative value, since they bring out all the dynamics of the forthcoming struggle, but nevertheless they must be taken into account. In view of this, White might contemplate if only a very rough plan in which the guiding light must be the old, but correct objective to occupy the d-file with the rooks.

21 Qe3?

In all probability, this move was also considered by Vilner to be a link in the plan of seizing the d-file with the rooks. White intends to continue 22 Nh4 and then Qf3. Sooner or later Black will have to take the bishop ... Nxd5, then Rxd5 and Rhd1 and the objective is achieved. Incidentally, with the present arrangement of forces, the queen defends the h3 pawn.

And yet White heads towards the objective on a bad road. The queen turns out to be in dangerous opposition to the enemy rook and Black immediately exploits this fact. From this it follows that an insufficiently correctly thought out plan needs to be still skilfully carried out. Only one of the links in the plan has to be "rusty" for the whole chain to fall to pieces.

White should stop at 21 c3, with Qc2 and the doubling of rooks to follow. With the move 21 c3 he would have also solved a series of accessory problems: the elimination of Black's ideas connected with the knight thrust to d4, on ... b4 he would reply c4, and finally, the placement of the pawn on c3 would restrict the activity of the opponent's king's bishop.

21 ... Nd4

The possibility of this sudden and unpleasant thrust has been created by the White queen being on the e-file.

22 Bxe7

White has exchanged his most favourably placed piece for the knight, which made only the one opening move - and not a particularly successful one at that. The decision to exchange on e7 was obviously dictated by the desire to retain the white-squared bishop at any price. However, this natural desire once again was not confirmed by an examination of the variations, which would have convinced White of the impossibility of retaining the bishop on the a2-g8 diagonal; but in this case is it worth preserving it?

The correct continuation was 22 Nxd4 exd4 23 Qf4 Nxd5 24 exd5 Re5 25 Bxd4 Rf5! 26 Qg3 Bxd4 27 Rxd4 Qd8 28 Rg1 Rb6, winning back one of the pawns, which leads

to an approximately equal position.

It should be noted that not possible was 22 Nxe5 Nxd5, and Black wins a piece (23 exd5 Nf5 or 23 Qxd4 Nf4!).

22 ... Rxe7 23 c3

Even worse is 23 a3 c6 24 Ba2 b4 and Black obtains an attack.

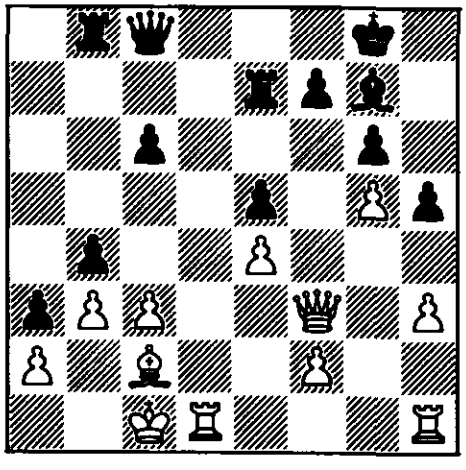
23 ... Nxf3 24 Qxf3 c6 25 Bb3 a4 26 Bc2 a3

White strives to create a weak square on d4, by eliminating the c3 pawn, and to exploit it as a base for the rooks, while if things turn out well then also for the bishop.

27 b3

Tempting but weak was 27 Bb3, on which would follow 27 ... c5 28 Bd5 axb2+ 29 Kxb2 c4! and Black's attack on the a-file, supported by the bishop from the f8 square, is rather dangerous. The White bishop is apparently well placed on the weak central d5 square, but its role there is insignificant because it acts in isolation without a proper connection with the rest of White's forces.

27 ... b4



28 c4

White assumes that "opposite-coloured" bishops and the locked position will lead to a draw, and again contents himself with a consideration of a general character. Meanwhile a concrete examination of the variations would have convinced him of the weakness of the advance of the c-pawn.

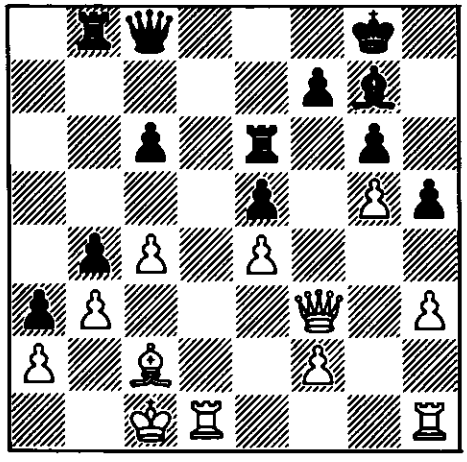
Thus, in the course of the game, we have observed several times how White has made not so much direct mistakes as mediocre moves, precisely because his choice of moves was made on the basis of general principles. This applies to his 9th, 17th, 19th, 21st, 23rd and finally the last, 28th move. Of course there are positions where one has to be guided by very rough data about the value of this or that move, but in the majority of cases the matter is somewhat different. The assessment of a position on the basis of an examination of variations, i.e. analysis, will always be more correct and make easier the finding of a right way to achieve the planned objective.

White's last move can be considered a fatal mistake. The best retort to the energetic attack on the black-squared territory in his camp was 28 Bd3, and if 28 ... bxc3, then 29 Bc4. Also in this case Black retains the better position, but his activity to a certain extent would be connected to the necessary defence of the f7 point. It should be added that the White

bishop is now doomed to life imprisonment behind its own pawns.

28 ... Re6

The beginning of the execution of a plan, consisting of four stages: occupation of the d4 square with the bishop and consolidating it there; preparation for the opening of the f-file; control of the file with the heavy pieces; invasion of the opponent's camp and organisation of a decisive attack on the king. Judging by White's reply, he apparently still does not discover this intention, which is murderous for him.



29 Rd3

Is this really to double rooks on the d-file? Alas White does not suspect that three moves later his rooks prove to be in the same situation as his bishop.

29 ... Bf8 30 Rhd1

30 Qe3 does not help, in view of 30 ... Be7 followed by ... Qf8.

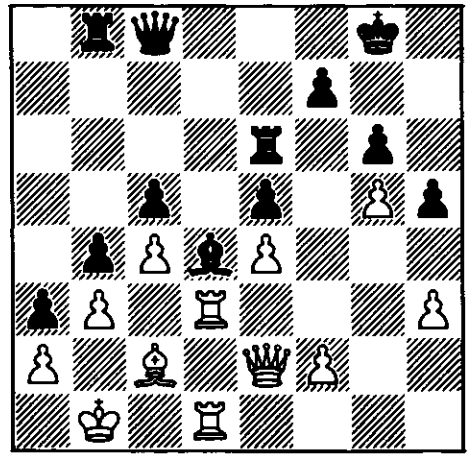
30 ... Bc5 31 Qe2 Bd4

Not fearing 32 f4, in view of 32 ... Bb2+ and ... exf4.

32 Kb1

With the intention of withstanding the seige. But this decision is incorrect, since Black has available a real plan to break through. It was better to sacrifice the exchange by 32 Rxd4 exd4 33 Rxd4, though even in this case it would not be a very complicated task. There would follow 33 ... Qc7! 34 Qd2 Ree8 with the decisive threat of ... Rbd8; if 35 Rd7, then 35 ... Qe5.

32 ... c5



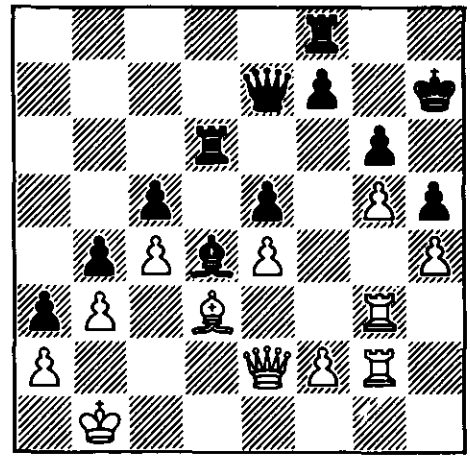
And so the bishop is consolidated on the eternal square d4. But it can be exploited as a real force only when harmony is established with the other Black forces. But for this it is necessary to organise an invasion of the rooks into the opponent's camp. It is obviously impossible to do this along the open d-file. It is necessary to open another file - in the present case, the f-file. However, the move ... f6 needs preparation. You see, in this way, not only the f-file but also the g-file is opened, along which the White rooks can develop a dangerous counter-attack on

the g6 pawn, and then also on the Black king with support from the queen. Black's attack on the f-file and White's counter-attack on the g-file will take the form of a mighty battle of six heavy pieces with inactive bishops. For the present, it is necessary for Black, firstly, to consolidate beforehand the position of his own king and in particular the g6 point, and secondly, to place his heavy pieces in such a way that now, after the exchange of pawns, he can strive for a breakthrough with all his might, i.e. to "build up" on the f-file. It is desirable to prepare this set-up in such a way that the queen is behind the rooks. It seems that the opening of the f-file is not a simple operation and the slightest carelessness might lead to the ruin of the whole plan.

33 Rf3

White discovers his opponent's intention. However, both the move of the rook to f3 and all the subsequent manoeuvres of White's heavy pieces indicate that he is not able to construct a plan of defence. After the opening and occupation of the f-file, Black threatens to win the f2 pawn, which turns out to be attacked four times, whereas it can be defended with only three White pieces. In the attack on the f2 pawn, all squares of invasion (f1, f2, f3) are open for the Black rooks. Therefore the relatively best plan of defence was the advance of the pawn to f3, the transfer of the queen to g2 and the freeing of the d1 square for the bishop, from where it can cover the pawn an extra time. This does not promise salvation, but it would have to some extent complicated the process of realisation for Black.

33 ... Qd8 34 h4 Qe7 35 Rg1 Rf8 36 Bd3 Kh7 37 Rfg3 Rd6 38 R1g2



38 ... f6

The aim of the second stage is carried out - the opening of the f-file, which is immediately occupied by Black's heavy pieces.

39 gxf6

If White continues to wait, for example by 39 Kc2, then follows 39 ... Qf7, and 40 f3 is not possible in view of 40 ... Rfd8 with an unavoidable invasion of the Black rooks, but this time along the d-file.

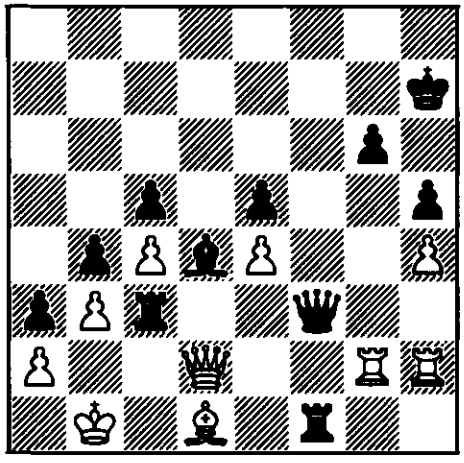
39 ... Rfxf6 40 Rg5 Qf7 41 Bc2 Rf4 42 Rh2 Rdf6

With this ends the third stage, and the struggle passes on to the concluding phase - the invasion and swift "taking prisoner" of the king.

43 Rgg2 Bxf2

Finally the bishop enters into full contact with the rooks. This harmony signifies a quick end.

44 Bd1 Bd4 45 Kc1 Rf1 46 Kc2 R6f3 47 Qd2 Rc3+ 48 Kb1 Qf3



Black is carried away by the process of invasion. 48 ... Be3 would have provoked an immediate capitulation. However, even now White soon gets mated. The apotheosis of achieving the planned objective is illustrated by the diagram.

49 Re2 Rxb3+ 50 axb3 Qxb3+ 51 Kc1 Bb2+ 0:1

It is mate on the following move.

In conclusion of this instructive game we wish to once again recount the basic reasons for White's defeat. With this we have in mind not individual weak moves or direct oversights, but the very essence of the errors of chess thinking. If we look at the matter from this point of view, then this basic reason should be seen as a non-concrete approach to many positions, arising in the course of the struggle. There were too few variations in White's thinking, when evaluating positions, and this prevented him foreseeing, if only roughly, the immediate course of events on the board. Thus White's 28th move, c4, bears witness to the fact that he did not foresee at all the manoeuvre ... Bg7-f8-c5-d4. When the bishop had invaded on d4, he was not able to correctly weigh up the dangers associated with this and, instead of an immediate sacrifice of the exchange, allowed the opponent to play ... c5. If White had imagined the consequences of the break ... f6, he, of course, would not have permitted the construction of a real stronghold on the d4 square. The non-concrete approach to the position was essentially a breach of the principles of dynamic play. White's thinking was undynamic, he assessed the position staticly and not in the light of a continous development of the struggle.

Besides these main reasons, White's mistake must further be regarded as a loss of steadfastness in improving his position to some extent. If one yields to the feeling of inevitable defeat, then thinking begins almost to run free. A weakened will to resist is shown by an indifference to the creative side of the game. In the present game, White's play, after 21 ... Nd4, gives the impression of demoralisation, while after 29 ... Bf8 even total doom.

Philidor Defence
White: **A.Evenson**
Black: **A.Alekhine**
(Kiev 1916)

1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 d6 3 d4 Nf6 4 Nc3 Nbd7

One of the principal variations of the Philidor Defence has been played. However, the position of the knight on d7 hampers Black and makes difficult the development of his queen's flank. Therefore, nowadays, another plan of development is advanced: 4 ... exd4 5 Nxd4 Be7 6 Be2 0-0 7 0-0 a6 8 a4 c5 9 Nf3 Nc6. Unfortunately there is still little practical experience of it, which does not allow any conclusions to be made, but in any case it has no less right to exist than the stereotyped theoretical variation chosen by Black in the present game. Black usually has to overcome some difficulties in order to come out of it all right into the broad scope of the middlegame.

5 Bc4 Be7 6 0-0 0-0 7 dxe5

White has no reason to fear the exchange ... exd4, which would only strengthen his position in the centre. And yet Evenson's decision to open the d-file is easy to understand since 7 Qe2, advanced in practice and approved in opening handbooks, justifies itself only after the reply given in the reference books, 7 ... c6. Meanwhile, namely after 7 Qe2, an interesting possibility is opened for Black with an exchange on d4, for example 7 ... exd4 8 Nxd4 Ne5 9 Bb3 c5 10 Nf5 Bxf5 11 exf5 Nc6 or Qd7 with excellent prospects.

The move 7 h3 creates the most difficulties for Black, which, on 8 ... Ne5 in the above-mentioned variation, allows the retreat 9 Be2 with the threat to begin an offensive by f4. On 9 ... d5, possible is the simple 10 exd5 Nxd5 11 Nxd5 Qxd5 12 Nf5! and White's position is preferable. Besides this, the move 7 h3 averts the thrust of the knight to g4 and thereby secures the e3 square for the bishop.

After Be3, White could move the knight away from f3 and attack the e5 pawn once again by f4. A rough course of events might be: 7 h3 c6 8 a4 Qc7 (8 ... Nxe4 9 Nxe4 d5 10 Bxd5 cxd5 11 Nc3 would create a lasting weakness for Black on d5) 9 Be3, and Black is cramped; White, however, threatens Nh2 or Nd2 with f4 to follow.

After the exchange in the centre, made by Evenson, the rooks will be attracted to the only open d-file, and if neither opponent succeeds in outstrippipng the other in this operation, then one must expect a mass exchange - heralding the drawing style.

7 ... dxe5

White's plan now is obvious - to free the way for the rooks to the d-file and attempt to double them on this line. The way leading to this objective is also clear. It consists of the moves Qe2, Be3 or

Bg5, Rfd1, a4 (if necessary to prevent ... b5) and possibly further, h3, so as not to allow the move ... Ng4 after Be3 and to prevent the pin ... Bg4. However it is necessary to decide in which order those moves should be made.

To reply to this question one must probably state concretely what plan Black must choose to bring the rooks to the d8 square and neutralise the opponent's play on the d-file. In order to develop his queen's flank, Black has to free his queen's knight from defence of the e5 pawn.

The most convenient way is to defend the e5 pawn again with the queen from c7; incidentally, with the move ... Qc7, Black frees the d8 square for the rooks. Thus 8 Qe2 c6 9 a4 Qc7 10 h3 Nc5 11 Rfd1 a5 12 Bg5 Be6 13 Rd2 Rad8. It is not hard to convince oneself that White does not succeed in controlling the d-file. Consequently, the exchange 7 dxe5 does not achieve its objective and is a link in a mistaken plan.

8 Bg5 c6 9 a4 Qc7 10 Qe2 Nc5 11 Ne1

Convinced that the entrance of the rooks on the d-file leads to only exchanges, White, apparently, does not want to take the road to a prospective draw (which, however, he himself created with his 7th move) and changes plan. He is prepared to concede the d-file, reckoning on preventing the invasion of the Black rooks with the covering knight on d3, and intends to prepare an attack himself on the centre by f4 and a subsequent opening of the f-file.

11 ... Ne6 12 Be3 Nd4 13 Qd1

13 Bxd4 exd4 is less attractive, and the second knight has to retreat to the first rank.

13 ... Rd8

Black accepts the gift of the open d-file. His plan will consist of three stages: doubling rooks on this file and removing the knight d3; invasion of the opponent's territory; realisation of the advantage achieved.

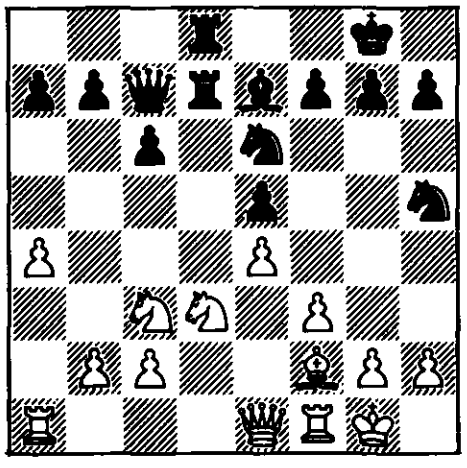
He will need over 30 moves to fulfil this plan, since the first part takes 10 moves, the second - 6, and the third - 20. It turns out that the process of realisation can be very protracted and complicated. In the previous game it only took a few moves, since the opponent was subjected to a rout even during the process of invasion; here, however, as we will see, White retains considerable resources for resistance even after the invasion of the rooks.

14 Nd3 Be6 15 Bxe6 Nxe6 16 Qe1 Rd7 17 f3

This advance bears witness to the fact that White has finally decided to switch to defence; now Black realises his plan without hindrance. Clearly it was necessary to continue with the consistent 17 f4, on which Alekhine was intending to reply 17 ... Ng4 and if 18 f5

then 18 ... Rxd3 19 cxd3 Nxe3 and 20 Qxe3 is not possible on account of 20 ... Bc5. But in place of 20 Qxe3 White could take the other knight - 20 fxe6 with the continuation 20 ... Nxf1 21 exf7+ Kxf7 22 Qxf1+ Kg8. Admittedly, the position created is also more favourable for Black. The threats ... Bc5+ or ... Qb6+ followed by ... Rf8 are rather unpleasant. All the same, by playing 23 Qe2, White could defend himself. However, after 17 f3, Black slowly but surely takes control of the whole board.

17 ... Rad8 18 Bf2 Nh5



Beginning a "hunt" for the knight d3.

19 Ne2 c5 20 b3 Nhf4 21 Nexf4 Nxf4 22 Nxf4 exf4

This completes the first stage of the plan and begins the second - the invasion on the open line. The square of invasion (weak square on an open line) is the d2 point. True, it can be covered by 23 Qc1 Rd2 24 Be1, but Black's main threat is not the direct ... Rd2, but the preliminary .... c4-c3.

23 c3

Forestalls the above-mentioned threat and, in the event of 23 ... c4 24 b4, covering the c5 square, which the Black bishop might occupy with great strength, but in return creating yet another weak square d3 on the d-file.

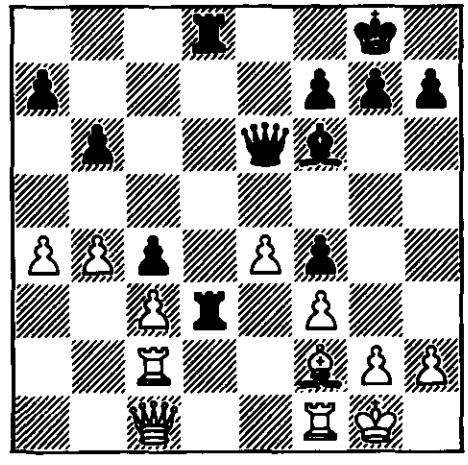
23 ... Qe5

Black is guaranteed an invasion on d3, and for the present he improves the position of his queen and bishop.

24 Ra2 Rd3 25 Rc2 b6

With the threat to win a pawn after ... Bf6.

26 Qc1 Qe6 27 Qb1 Bf6 28 b4 c4 29 Qc1



29 ... g5

Black begins to carry out the concluding part of the plan. All his pieces occupy ideal positions. Admittedly, the invading rook itself cannot deliver the decisive blow, but, by paralysing White's forces, it assists in the carrying out of a series of operations which lead to a further deterioration of his position. The pawn advance on the king's flank, which Alekhine un-

dertakes, is probably the most energetic way for Black to realise his advantage, personified by the menacing and unassailable position of the rook on the weak d3 square.

30 h3 Be5 31 Qa1 h5 32 a5

White opens the a-file, but the opponent's attack develops at such a pace, that he already will not manage to exploit this airway. If he had wanted to, Black could have deprived White of even this possibility, by playing ... a6.

32 ... g4 33 axb6 axb6 34 Bh4 f6 35 Be1 g3

Finally suffocating the opponent. The final aspiration will consist of the invasion of the queen, along the g1-a7 diagonal, to e3.

36 Qa6 Qc6

With the threat ... Ra8.

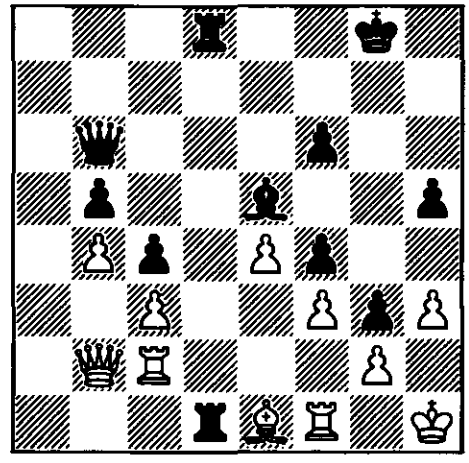
37 Qa3

The continuation 37 Ra2 Bxc3 was also hopeless, as indeed was everything else. White reaps the fruits of his two mistaken plans - with the moves 11 Ne1 and 17 f3. The consequences of bad moves will not always be ruinous, but following an incorrect plan is in fact "like death".

37 ... b5 38 Qb2 Qb6+ 39 Kh1 Rd1

Not at once 39 ... Qe3, in view of 40 Re2, but now Black threatens 40 ... Qe3 41 Re2 Qxc3.

No help is 40 Rg1 Qxg1+ or 40 Re2 R8d3 with the threat ... Bxc3.



There followed:

40 Rc1 Qe3 41 Ra1 Bc7 42 Qa2 Rxa1 43 Qxa1 Qe2 44 Rg1 Bb6

and four moves later

0:1

Chapter Three

Play on the a-file

We have chosen as the basic theme the question of planning play along the a-file, when it occurs with castling king's side by both opponents. Namely these cases of play along the a-file assume a specific character, requiring an independent examination.

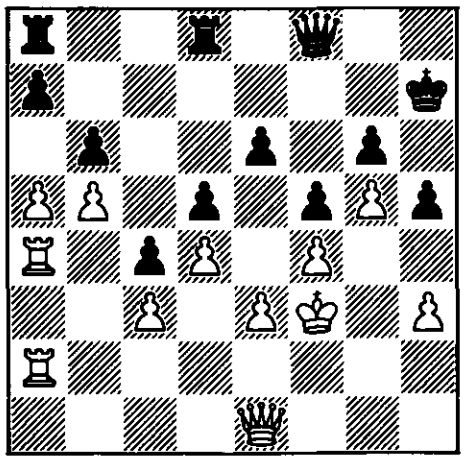
What features characterise play along the a-file, with king's side castling by both sides? Firstly, the a-file is as distant as can be from the king's flank, as a result of which the principal events, for the time being, do not affect the castled positions. Even more important is the fact that the side holding the initiative in play on the a-file must concentrate large-scale forces, and in any case the rooks, on that file or near it. It means that such play is attended by the diversion of important pieces from the king's flank. But this could prompt the opponent to direct his forces to an attack there, in the event of which it is very important to take care of the defence of the king's flank with a solid pawn chain and a minor piece covering detachment.

The technique of opening the a-file consists of the exchange of the a-pawn for the b-pawn. Such an exchange is difficult to achieve if the b-pawn stands on its original square. Therefore it is useful, as a pre-requisite to opening the a-file, to provoke the advance of the knight's pawn one or two squares. There is no need to mention that the plan of opening the a-file and the future invasion on it must be carefully thought out, taking into account all the concrete positional conditions, to weigh up whether it is possible for the opponent to advantageously prevent the opening of the a-file or launch a successful counter-attack on the king's flank.

In planning play on the a-file, it is of course necessary to secure the occupation of the opened line with his rooks. It means that an appropriate regrouping of forces must take place even before the opening of the line.

As an excellent example of the technique of invasion on the a-file might serve the ending of the game **Marco-Muller**, played as long ago as the end of the last century (1898) in the accessory tournament of the international congress in London.

White has prepared the opening and occupation of the a-file.



Now an immediate capture on b6 was also not bad. After 33 axb6 axb6 34 Qa1! Rxa4 35 Rxa4 the a-file would be in White's hands, which, in connection with the weakness of the b6 and e6 pawns, must in the end decide the game in his favour. And yet the reply 35 ... Rd7 would have allowed Black to defend himself quite tenaciously.

Marco chose the best possibility:

33 Qa1!

only now threatening axb6. In order not to lose a pawn, Black is forced to take the rook away from the a8 square, after which White captures the a-file, retaining all the heavy pieces. There followed:

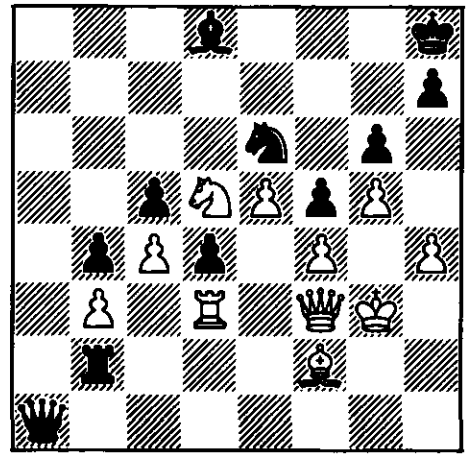
33 ... Rab8 34 axb6 axb6 35 Ra7+ Kh8 36 Rc7 Ra8 37 Raa7 Rxa7 38 Qxa7

White has doubled on the seventh rank and this predetermines a quick end.

38 ... Rb8 39 Rh7+ Kg8 40 Rh6 Qe8 41 Qh7+ Kf8 42 Rxg6 1:0

In this example there were quiet conditions on the king's flank. The locked pawn chain guarded the White king from any sort of trouble and he was able to transfer all his forces to the a-file.

In the game **Lasker-Showalter** (Nürnberg 1896) the overall situation was rather different. Black has succeeded in opening the a-file with the pawn march-route ... a5-a4xb3, captured it and invaded on the first and second ranks with his heavy pieces. Lasker endeavours to exploit as far as possible the time spent by Showalter on the whole of this operation, to create counter threats against the enemy king, which remains on h8 under cover of the pawn chain h7-g6-f5 and the knight e6. After White's 60th move this strategically interesting game arrived at the following position, which is not easy to evaluate.



Clouds hang over the White king but also White has his own chances. The splendidly placed knight on d5, transferring to f6, opens the h1-a8 diagonal for the queen. By penetrating on it to b7 or c6, he is able to create direct threats to the enemy king.

There was a sharp and interesting development of events:

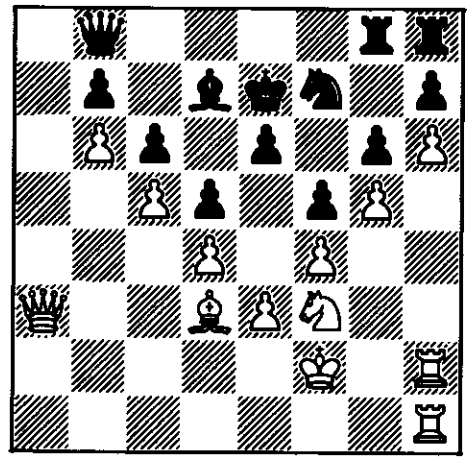
60 ... Rb1 61 Nf6 Rh1

With the threat ... Qf1. However Black does not foresee the opponent's dangerous counter-attack. He could make a draw, but not more, by playing 61 ... Rg1+ 62 Bxg1 Qxg1+ 63 Kh3 Nxf4+ 64 Qxf4 Qh1+ 65 Kg3 Qg1+ 66 Kh3 Qh1+ etc. (67 Qh2 Qf1+). True, on 61 ... Rg1+ possible is 62 Kh2, but then 62 ... Rf1 63 Rd2 Qe1 leads to a complicated position in which Black can apparently defend himself. Now, however, there comes an immediate denouement.

62 Qb7 Ng7 63 Qf7 1:0

Could Black, instead of 60 ... Rb1, have played stronger? 60 ... Qc1 offered chances of a win. If 61 Nf6 then 61 ... Qc2 and there is only one more for White - the return of the knight to d5, since on 62 Bg1 follows 62 ... Qg2+. Black's further plan is this: to exchange queens by playing 62 ... Qe2, return the rook to b2 (in the event of 63 Qxe2), transfer the king to f7 and dispatch the knight to a5 to win the b3 pawn. Several instructive examples of play on the a-file can be found in the creative work of Capablanca.

In a game with **Treybal** (Carlsbad 1929), **Capablanca**, playing White, after a protracted seige of the enemy position, succeeded, by locking the centre and the king's flank, in opening the a-file and invading on it with the heavy pieces.



White easily controls the a-file. Black, locked up by White's powerful black-squared seven-pawn chain, is obliged to stick to waiting tactics. The only question is whether White can exploit the inevitable invasion of his rook on a7.

The game continued:

40 Ra1 Rc8

Useless is 40 ... Qa8 41 Qb2.

41 Qb4 Rhd8 42 Ra7 Kf8 43 Rhh1 Be8 44 Rha1 Kg8 45 R1a4 Kf8 46 Qa3 Kg8

White has invaded, placing his heavy pieces on the a-file in an ideal order with the queen behind, but ... what next? The following manoeuvre with the king testifies to the fact that Capablanca has still not put together a clear plan of action.

47 Kg3 Bd7 48 Kh4 Kh8 49 Qa1 Kg8 50 Kg3

The king was poorly placed on h4; after the removal of the White knight from f3, there could arise the motive of a sacrifice on g5.

50 ... Kf8 51 Kg2 Be8 52 Nd2

Everything becomes clear. Black has a weak pawn on b7; the White knight is headed for a5.

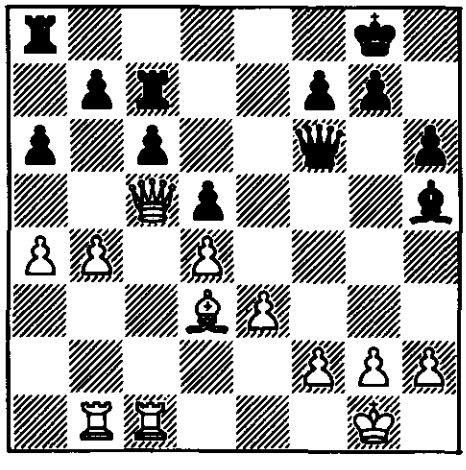
52 ... Bd7 53 Nb3 Re8 54 Na5 Nd8 55 Ba6! bxa6 56 Rxd7

The seventh rank is included in the zone of invasion.

56 ... Re7 57 Rxd8+ 1:0

It is apparent from the ending that the rook on a7 gave defensive help to the minor pieces. The question arises whether White would have been able to exploit his enormous advantage in space on the a-file if there were only heavy pieces on the board? Alas, no. He would have nothing with which to attack the b7 pawn.

A good reply to this question might be gleaned from the concluding part of the 25th game of the 1927 world championship match, **Capablanca- Alekhine.**



26 b5 axb5

Forced, otherwise White himself exchanges on a6 and invades on the b-file.

27 axb5

On the face of it, it seems that the a-file will even be occupied by Black, but this is only a semblance.

27 ... Bg6!

Anticipating future events, Alekhine forces an exchange of the last minor pieces in order to make easier the subsequent defence of the b7 pawn.

28 Bxg6 Qxg6 29 Ra1 Rac8

On 29 ... Rcc8 White would win a pawn by replying 30 Rxa8 Rxa8 31 Qb6.

30 b6 Rd7 31 Ra7 Kh7 32 Rca1 f5 33 Qc2 Re7 34 g3 Rce8

Black, for the present, does not threaten anything on the e-file, but also White cannot increase the pressure on the b7 pawn.

35 Ra8 Re4 36 Rxe8 Rxe8 37 Ra7 Rb8 38 h4 h5 39 Kg2 Qe6 40 Qd3 Kg6 41 Kh2 ½:½.

Alekhine expressed the opinion that, instead of 26 b5, White should play at once 26 Ra1, in order to avoid the exchange of bishops. In this case he would have more chances of exploiting his advantage on the queen's flank, but retaining the bishops would also have increased the defensive resources of Black, who, moreover, because of the open character of the position, could organise counterplay in the centre and on the king's flank.

There is a sharper, but in return very keen, course of events when play on the a-file is countered with an initiative displayed by the opponent on the king's flank. At times

play on the a-file will develop into a real counterattack, which, when combined with measures to defend one's own king, can bring decisive success, particularly when the opponent is too carried away by an attack on the king's flank.

So let us return to practical material.

Bird's Opening
White: **P.Evtifeev**
Black: **D.Danushevsky**
(Petersburg 1909)
1 f4 d5 2 e3 c5 3 Nf3 Nf6 4 b3 Nc6 5 Bb2 e6

In this opening White's plan consists of the following: by firmly controlling the e5 square, to obtain a dominating position on the king's flank and then, by establishing a harmony of action between the bishop b2, queen and king's rook (0-0, Rf1-f3-g3 or h3), to launch a direct attack on the enemy king. From the point of view of countering this plan Black plays the opening, if not weakly, then inoffensively. One of the best possibilities for Black is the development of the bishop on g7. Therefore in place of 3 ... Nf6, worth considering is 3 ... g6. Likewise Black does not need to hurry with the development of the queen's knight, so as not to allow the pin with the bishop on b5 or first of all to prevent this pin by ... a6.

6 Be2

Undoubtedly, more consistent was 6 Bb5 with a subsequent exchange of the knight, which allows White to even more firmly consolidate himself on the central e5 point. We are time and again convinced of the need to link planning between the opening and central stage of the chess game.

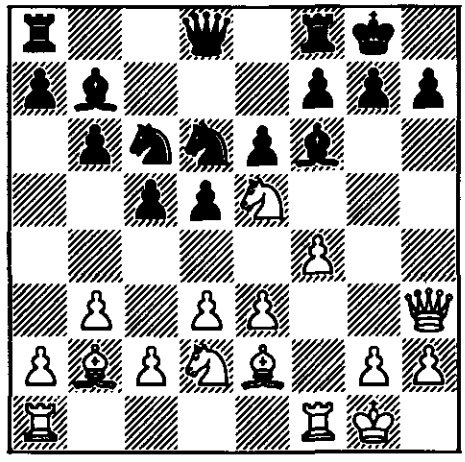
6 ... Be7 7 0-0 0-0 8 Qe1 b6 9 Ne5

At least a premature thrust. Both now and on the following move he should prefer d3, since an exchange on e5 only plays into Black's hands.

9 ... Bb7? 10 Qg3 Ne4

Both opponents play not planned, but separate moves. Instead of 10 Qg3 it was necessary to play at first 10 d3, so as, on 10 ... d4, to have the reply e4. However, Black could exploit the favourable conditions and begin an offensive in the centre by ... d4. Possibly, he feared 11 Bf3, but the following variation shows that there were no grounds at all for "fright": 11 ... Nd5 12 e4 Nxe5 13 fxe5 Nb4 14 Na3 a6 with a clear plan of a pawn advance on the queen's flank, or 12 Nxc6 Bxc6 13 exd4 (13 e4? Bh4 14 Qg4? f5 15 exf5 exf5 16 Bxd5+ Qxd5! with a decisive superiority) 13 ... Bh4 14 Qh3 Bf6 and Black obviously stands better and holds the initiative. The transfer of the knight from f6 to d6, and the bishop to f6, carried out instead of this, is also not bad, but it solves only one particular problem.

11 Qh3 Bf6 12 d3 Nd6 13 Nd2



He should wait a little with this natural and even necessary move, which springs from concrete considerations. As will be seen from the note to Black's move in reply, it would have been very useful now to close down the f5 square for the opponent's knight by playing g4.

13 ... d4?

Side by side with the 21st move, Black's most serious positional mistake in the present game. True, there is no denying that he has a certain planning for his game. He intends a broad pawn advance on the queen's flank, projecting it on the theme of play on the a-file. However, upon this, Black makes a very superficial calculation of White's attacking possibilities on the king's flank and, by eliminating the pawn tension in the centre himself with his last move, leaves White free to act in that sector of the board. This mistake must have fatal consequences.

Meanwhile, Black had at his disposal an interesting possibility - 13 ... Bxe5, and White has to think carefully before deciding how to recapture the bishop. If, for example, 14 Bxe5, then 14 ... Nxe5 15 fxe5 Nf5 and on 16 g4 follows 16 ... Qh4, while on 16 Bg4 good enough is 16 ... Nh6. The sacrifice of the exchange is doubtful in view of 17 ... Bc8 or 17 ... Qe7. The same consideration applies also to the variation 14 fxe5 Nf5, only in this situation the exchange sacrifice promises White rather more chances, since the bishop on b2 is still present, though after 15 Rxf5 exf5 16 Qxf5 Bc8 17 Qh5 Ne7 Black has quite a solid position.

However, none of this happens and Black's game begins to go downhill.

14 Nxc6 Bxc6 15 e4 e5

On top of everything else, admittedly already in the worse position, Black allows the opponent to cut off all his forces from the king's flank and develop an irresistible attack on the king. 15 ... Be7 was better.

16 f5 Bg5

The bishop will invade on the third rank, but alas it turns out here to be only "a caliph for a day".

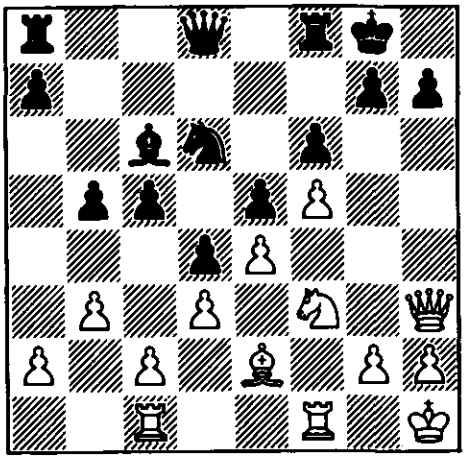
17 Nf3 Be3+ 18 Kh1 f6 19 Bc1 Bxc1

Black cannot hold his ground on e3. For example, 19 ... Nb5 20 Ng1, attacking the bishop again with the queen.

20 Raxc1 b5

Black begins to carry out his plan of attack on the queen's flank. On an immediate 20 ... a5 could

follow 21 a4. But now he intends to take the route-march ... a5-a4xb3. However, White's attack must achieve its objective quicker.



21 Nh4?

In pursuit of beautiful incidental threats, like Ng6, White makes an incorrect assessment of the position. You see, he cannot break the defensive line of Black pawns on the king's flank with just a one-piece attack. White chooses an unrealistic plan, his idea is not sufficiently concrete. He should, however, play 21 g4 and if 21 ... Nf7, then 22 Qg3. There might then follow: 22 ... h6 23 h4 a5 24 Rf2 a4 25 Rg1 axb3 26 axb3 Ra2 27 g5! hxg5 28 hxg5 Rxc2 29 Rh2 fxg5 30 Qh3 Nh6 31 Rxg5 with numerous threats.

21 ... Be8

The move Ng6 threatens nothing, if, of course, Black does not accept the sacrifice, and therefore it was possible, without losing time, to play 21 ... a5. Sometimes the choice of a move can be explained by the style of a chessplayer. And Danushevsky was an extraordinarily careful chessplayer, who never missed an opportunity to strengthen his lines of defence, even if there was no direct need for this.

***22* Qg4 a5 23 Rf3 a4**

Now even Danushevsky pays no attention to White's attack. His plan is build on sand.

24 Rh3

White still cherishes the hope of playing after 24 ... axb3 25 axb3 Ra2 26 Ng6 Rf7? 27 Rxh7 or 26 ... Bxg6 27 fxg6 h6 28 Qe6+ Kh8 29 b4! With his reply, Black destroys even this modest hope, after which the crowd of White pieces on the king's flank proves to be absolutely useless.

Convinced of the failure of his plan of attack, Evtifeev begins a retreat on all lines and hurries to transfer his pieces back from the king's flank. Meanwhile Black seizes the initiative and invades the enemy camp along the a-file.

24 ... Qd7! 25 Qg3 axb3 26 axb3 Ra2 27 Qe1

Nothing was offered by 27 Ng6 Bxg6 28 fxg6 h6 29 Bg4 Qe7.

27 ... Qa7 28 Rf3 Bf7 29 Rf1 Ra8 30 Nf3

White's pieces return to the same positions from where they began the offensive ten moves ago! He has succeeded in avoiding material loss, but in return the positional losses he has suffered are serious. Black has opened and captured the a-file, his rook has invaded on a2, he threatens ... c4

and the extending of the invasion along the second rank.

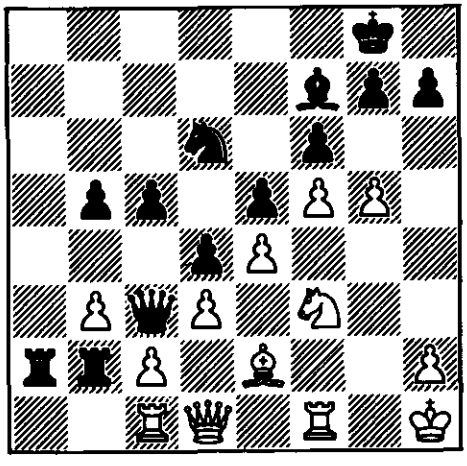
30 ... Qa5 31 Qd1 Qc3

Systematic, but a rather slow way of realising the advantage. More energetic was 31 ... c4 32 bxc4 bxc4 33 Rb1 Qc3 34 Ne1 cxd3, or 33 g4 Rb8 34 Ra1 Rbb2.

32 g4

White hurls himself into the attack 11 moves late and in far worse conditions than on the 21st move, but this is his last and only chance of saving himself. As they say, better late than never.

32 ... Rb2 33 g5 Raa2



A colourful and instructive scene of invasion!

34 gxf6 gxf6 35 Ne1

White counts on sharpening the game by Bh5.

35 ... Kf8 36 Rg1?

One of those unfortunate mistakes, which is usually provoked by too great tension of struggle. After 36 Bh5 Black would still have experienced some trouble. Thus, if 36 ... Bxb3, then 37 Qg4 and White, threatening Rg1, obtains an attack. Nevertheless even the attempt 36 Bh5 would prove unsuccessful, if Black were to then simply continue 36 ... c4 37 Bxf7 Nxf7 38 bxc4 bxc4 39 dxc4 Qe3, winning the e4 pawn and the game.

36 ... Bxb3!

White overlooked this reply. On 37 cxb3 follows 37 ... Rxe2, threatening mate in one move.

37 Bh5

So as, on 37 ... Bxc2, to reply 38 Qg4.

37 ... Nxe4!

A beautiful and decisive blow. Nf2+ is threatened.

38 dxe4

White also has at his disposal the move 38 Qf3, but after 38 ... Bd5! 39 dxe4 Qxf3+ 40 Bxf3 Bc6, despite the extra piece he remains powerless against the threatening avalanche of Black pawns on the queen's flank, for example 41 Rg2 c4 42 Kg1 b4 43 Kf1 b3 44 cxb3 Rxg2 45 Bxg2 c3 etc.

38 ... Bxc2 39 Nxc2 Rxc2 40 Rxc2 Qxc2 41 Qxc2 Rxc2

An endgame is reached in which Black's three connected passed pawns leave White no hope. He resists for a few more moves out of inertia.

42 Rb1 b4 43 Bd1 d3 44 Kg1 Ke7 45 h3 Kd6 46 Kf1 Kc6 47 Rb3 Rc3 48 Ke1 Kb5 49 Kd2 Rxb3 50 Bxb3 c4 0:1

In this most complicated and interesting game one circumstance attracts our attention. Black's most serious mistake, which might have

led to his defeat, was the 13th move ... d4, and yet it is precisely the d4 pawn which is the cornerstone of his successful pawn advance on the queen's flank! Thus, because of the changing situation on the board, a bad move is converted into just the opposite. This is one of the manifestations of dialectics, organically inherent in chess.

We look at one more game, perhaps the most brilliant illustration of play on the a-file, and the dangerous consequence ensuing from an invasion on it with heavy pieces.

English Opening
White: **M.Yudovich**
Black: **V.Alatortsev**
(Semi-final, 14th USSR Championship 1944)

1 c4 e5 2 Nc3 Nc6 3 Nf3 Nf6 4 e3 d6 5 d4 Be7 6 Be2 0-0 7 0-0 Re8 8 b3 Bg4 9 Bb2 Bf8 10 h3 Bh5

Strictly speaking, for the present, both opponents still have no real, contemplated plans. They manoeuvre with circumspection, attempting to concentrate the action of the pieces and pawns around the central squares, and are guided in their actions by rough considerations.

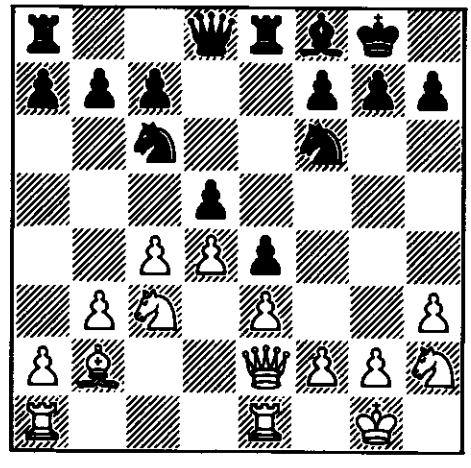
11 Re1

Carried away by manoeuvering, White overlooks the loss of a pawn.

11 ... e4

The pawn is won in this way: 11 ... Bxf3 12 Bxf3 (in order to save the pawn, it is necessary to play 12 gxf3, but, after 12 ... exd4 13 exd4 Nh5, Black has an advantage which is worth more than a pawn) 12 ... exd4 13 exd4 Rxe1+ 14 Qxe1 Nxd4 15 Bxb7 Nc2 16 Qd1 Nxa1 17 Bxa8 Nxb3. However it is very difficult to capitalise on this gain after 18 Nd5! Nxd5 19 Bxd5 Nc5 20 Bd4. It is possible that Black, not wishing to be content with a draw, deliberately rejected this variation, intending to create a potentially weak square on d3 and limit the activity of the bishop b2. This is still not a plan, but already preparatory action for the plan.

12 Nh2 Bxe2 13 Qxe2 d5!



White's queen's bishop is now seriously cramped, Black has succeeded in organising a strong pawn outpost in the centre on e4, the position of his pieces is obviously better, the manoeuvre ... Nb4-d3, with the establishment of the knight on the weak square, is threatened. The principal events,

however, must take place in the centre.

The d5 square - this is the point to which the attention of the opponents must be riveted. The d5 pawn supports the e4 pawn, and if Black succeeds in playing ... c6 after removing the knight from that square, then this would considerably strengthen his central pawn group. Consolidation of the centre and an invasion on d3 - this is the content of the first stage of Black's plan. From this follows White's next task: to prevent this intention of the opponent. He can increase his influence over the d5 point by the move 14 Ng4.

Since ... dxc4 would be a violation of Black's whole plan, there remains 14 ... Nxg4, on which there are at least 3 continuations for White - Qxg4, hxg4 and cxd5, leading to complicated variations in which the opponent would have to solve a series of new problems, for example 15 Qxg4 Ne7 16 cxd5 f5 17 Qe2 Nxd5 18 Qc4 c6 19 Rac1 etc.

Even 14 a3, barring the way of the Black knight to d3, with the possible continuation 14 ... Na5 15 Qc2 dxc4 16 bxc4 Nxc4 17 Nxe4 Nxb2 18 Nxf6+ Qxf6 19 Qxb2 Qb6 20 Qc3, would be better than what happens in the game.

14 Rad1

A planless move, not pursuing any kind of objective and not guided by a concrete idea. Furthermore it is unsatisfactory because it does not prevent the penetration of the Black knight to the weak d3 square.

But what guided White in making his last move? It seems he simply decided to transfer the rook from the corner square a1, where it is inactive, to an undoubtedly better central square d1.

There will be positions (particularly in the opening stage) in which such a method of activity, based on general considerations, is fully justified. However, even in strictly positional conditions, there is usually sufficient material for a concrete play, for the performing and completion of a task based on the calculation of variations. This applies wholly to the present game.

14 ... Nb4! 15 Rf1 c6 16 Ng4 Nxg4 17 Qxg4 Nd3 18 Ba1

White's position is considerably worse, but the main thing is that he has no prospects at all with the presence of the knight in the very centre of his army. Therefore a courageous solution would be to sacrifice the exchange 18 Rxd3 exd3 19 Qd1. The splinter would be removed and White could put up a stubborn resistance. Instead of this he prefers to drag on a miserable existence.

18 ... g6 19 f4 f5 20 Qe2 Bb4

With the intention of exchanging the only piece capable of ousting the knight from d3, and thereby securing himself the

"eternal" knight. And yet better was 20 ... b6 or ... Qa5.

21 Qc2?

But it is difficult to leave this move without a question mark. White again ignores the opponent's intention and plays without a plan. 21 Na4 was necessary, with the threat Nb2. In the event of 21 ... Ba3 follows 22 Nc5! Nxc5 23 dxc5 Bxc5 24 cxd5 cxd5 25 Kh1 with the dangerous threat Qb2. If, however, on 21 Na4, Black replies 21 ... b6, then White all the same exchanges the invading knight by 22 Nb2. This is why Black should have played ... b6 on the 20th move, so as not to allow the move Nc5.

21 ... Bxc3

After this exchange, White's game can hardly be saved.

22 Bxc3 b5! 23 c5

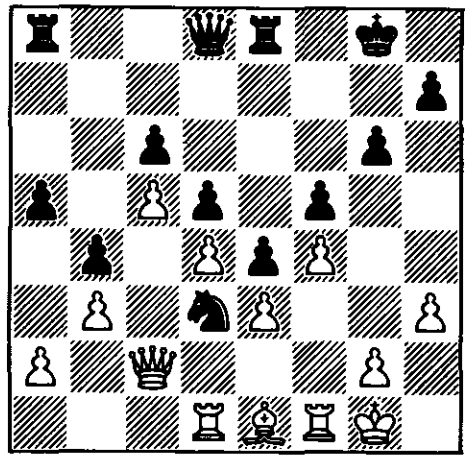
Opening the c-file is favourable only for Black, who without difficulty will occupy it with his rooks.

23 ... b4!

Pinning down the b3 pawn, which is important for the execution of the plan of attack on the a-file.

24 Be1 a5!

Beginning the carrying out of the second stage of the plan - to open the a-file. White cannot prevent this and his only chance of resistance is to organise an attack on the king's flank. A small, though clearly insufficient prerequisite for this is, for example, the move g4.



25 g4

And so it is: White tries his last chance.

25 ... Qd7

Black will combine active play on the queen's flank with necessary prophylactics on the king's. This presents no difficulties since the threats are very modest. Now Black himself threatens to take on g4.

26 gxf5 Qxf5 27 Kh2 Re7

Another advantage for Black should be noted: the seventh and eighth ranks, present themselves as splendid routes for transfer of the rooks from one edge of the board to the other, allow him to very forcefully exploit the powerful activity of these mobile pieces. This freedom and speed of manoeuvre in his own rear along the open ranks can sometimes prove to be a decisive factor. White, in this respect, finds himself in a far worse situation. On the first rank there is a dense crowd of his own pieces, the second is also jammed since, on each of these lines, the knight, established

on d3, takes away two squares. Below we will see how well Black exploits the advantage of his control of White's "rear".

28 Rg1 h6

It is necessary to prevent the invasion of the White rook on g5.

29 Rd2 Kh7 30 Rdg2 a4! 31 Bh4

Of course, not 31 Rxg6 in view of 31 ... Nxe1 (or 31 ... Qxg6 32 Rxg6 Nxe1!).

31 ... axb3 32 axb3 Rea7

Beginning a typical process of invasion and also the realisation of it - a flank attack on the king's position.

33 Qe2

It seems that White has finally created a real threat - Rxg6.

33 ... Rg8 34 Rg4

What for? After 34 Qg4 the struggle could be continued, but now the end approaches surprisingly quickly: the final scene of the White army, completely taken captive, is rather colourful and characteristic for an attack from the flank.

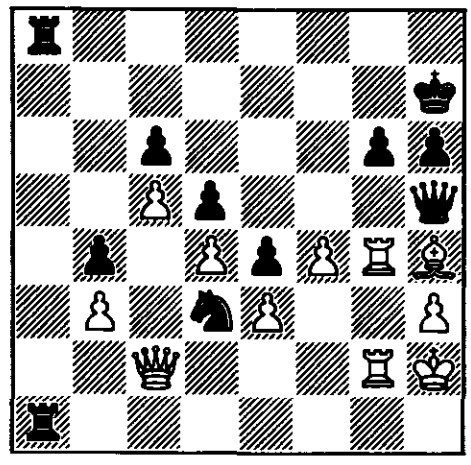
34 ... Ra3 35 Qc2 Rga8 36 R1g2 Qh5 37 Bg3 Ra1 38 Bh4

Realisation! The harmonious activity of the Black rooks switches from the a-file to the first rank.

(see next diagram)

38 ... Rc1 39 Qe2 Raa1 40 Qd2 Rh1+ 41 Kg3 Raf1 0:1

On 42 Rh2 could follow 42 ...



Rf3+ 43 Kg2 Rb1 winning the queen. However, here there is already more than one way to victory.

Though we have given special attention to the breakthrough of heavy pieces on the a-file, it is clear that its planning, technique and results are not very much different from the breakthrough into the position of the enemy army on other files. Of course, there is some difference, particularly in the process of the realisation of the invasion, between the course of the struggle with a breakthrough along the edge-file and the central e or d lines. In the latter case, the rooks which break through have to operate in the direction of both flanks, and at times this can even weaken the strength of the breakthrough.

However, upon an invasion along the edge-file, the attack of the rooks is launched in the direction of one flank and therefore becomes, as it were, more concrete and strong.

Chapter Four

The centre and its Strategical Significance

The knight on e5 and d5 (e4 and d4). The pawn centre. Attack with the central pawns. "Hanging" pawns

The part of the board which includes the squares e4, d4, e5 and d5 is called the centre. These squares are called central.

The arrangement of the pieces in the centre, from where they operate in several directions, might serve as a basis for the construction of very active plans. Many different ideas and combinations have been carried out on this basis.

At the end of the last century the famous American chessplayer, Pillsbury, was able to win a number of interesting games where the basis of the initiative was the planting of a knight on e5. In the 20's and 30's of our century, a plan, where the whole object was the occupation of the d5 square (for Black - d4) with the knight, became increasingly pronounced. The centralised knight, supported by pawns, hampered the activity of the opponent, guaranteed a lasting initiative and frequently brought the champions of such ideas success.

We return, in the first instance, to Pillsbury's idea, introduced into international practice at the 1895 Hastings tournament in games against Tarrasch and Schlechter. These proceeded identically up to the 11th move:

1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3 Nc3 Nf6 4 Bg5

The so-called Orthodox variation of the Queen's Gambit. This variation is also met in our day and consequently continues to be developed, but the proportion of games with it, in comparison with the end of the 19th and the first two decades of the 20th century, was reduced owing to the opening systems which arose on the basis of the reply 1 ... Nf6. The fact should also be taken into account that methods of play have considerably improved for Black, and White does not succeed in easily obtaining a positional superiority as happened in Pillsbury's time.

4 ... Be7 5 Nf3 Nbd7 6 Rc1 0-0 7 e3 b6

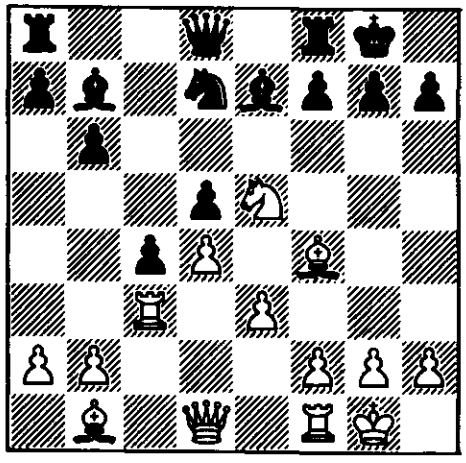
This was nearly always played in the old days. In itself, the plan with the development of the bishop on b7 looks quite logical and does not arouse any objections on principle. But a principal - is a principal and concreteness - is concreteness. Pillsbury was the first to have doubts about the then generally accepted method of play

for Black. In the course of time, more and more the shady side of the move ... b6 followed by ... Bb7 was revealed, and now there is a decided preference for 7 ... c6 with the aim of preparing an invasion of the Black knight on e4. (7 ... Ne4 at once is not possible, in view of 8 Bxe7 Qxe7 9 cxd5 Nxc3 10 Rxc3 exd5 11 Rxc7.) Besides this, 7 ... c6 allows him, in the event of 8 Bd3, to bring about a favourable relaxation of tension in the centre by 8 ... dxc4 9 Bxc4 Nd5. Practice has shown that in this way Black succeeds in overcoming the difficulties with the development of his queen's flank.

8 cxd5 exd5 9 Bd3 Bb7 10 0-0 c5

As distinct from the game with Tarrasch, where Pillsbury lost a tempo - 11 Re1, allowing Black to take over the initiative after 11 ... c4 12 Bb1 a6 13 Ne5 b5 14 f4 Re8 15 Qf3 Nf8 16 Ne2? Ne4!, against Schlechter he continued

11 Bb1 Ne4 12 Bf4 Nxc3 13 Rxc3 c4 14 Ne5



This is Pillsbury's initial position for attack on the king's flank, based on the position of the knight e5.

Beginning from this time, Pillsbury's strategical idea was frequently employed both by himself and many other players.

Here are a number of examples of the purposeful exploitation of the position of the knight on e5.

Queen's Gambit
White: **R.Charousek**
Black: **S.Alapin**
(Berlin 1897)

1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3 Nc3 b6

Here, this continuation is even weaker than on the 7th move.

4 Nf3 Bb7 5 e3

The absence of the knight on f6 was exploited very energetically in the game Pillsbury-Swidersky, played in the international tournament at Hannover 1902: 5 cxd5 exd5 6 e4! dxe4 7 Ne5! with the threat Bc4. After 7 ... Bd6 8 Qg4! Kf8 9 Bc4 Bxe5 10 dxe5 Qd4 11 Bd5! White obtained a direct attack on the king, stuck in the centre, and achieved victory already on the 30th move.

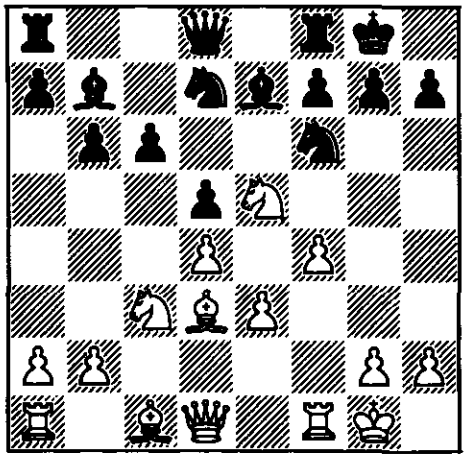
5 ... Nf6 6 cxd5 exd5 7 Bb5+

The planned placement of this bishop is the d3 square, but White gives the check in order to provoke the reply ... c6, breaking the communication of Black's queen's bishop with the central squares. Such "intermediate" moves, which are made on one's way to solving a particular problem, are of course

not detrimental but to the benefit of a thought out plan.

7 ... c6 8 Bd3 Be7 9 0-0 0-0 10 Ne5 Nbd7 11 f4

If White had not forced the advance ... c6, Black could now, not without advantage, have played 11 ... Ne4.



11 ... c5 12 Qf3

Of course, if the White bishop were standing not on c1, but on g5, as in Pillsbury's games, his position would be even more threatening. Now Black should think about the defence of the h7 square, since after Qh3 threats begin to hang over him.

12 ... Ne8?

In contemplating a complicated regrouping plan, consisting of the transfer of the king's knight to d6 and the queen's to f6 which would have given Black control over the e4 point, he overlooks a little combination, as a result of which White wins a pawn.

Instead of the mistaken retreat of the knight to e8 he should continue 12 ... Re8 and then ... Nf8, defending the main weakness in the castled position - h7. Of course the dominating position of the knight on e5 makes Black's game difficult, but there is a protracted struggle in prospect.

13 Bxh7+ Kxh7 14 Qh3+ Kg8 15 Qxd7 Nd6 16 Qh3 Ne4 17 Rd1 c4

A mistaken plan. Locking the centre, in the present position, plays into White's hands and he can now calmly concentrate his efforts on an attack upon the king's flank. He should exchange on c3 and prepare play on the c-file.

18 Nxe4 dxe4 19 Bd2

There is no sense in White taking the pawn on c4 at the cost of a loss of time and removal of the knight from a strong position. On 19 Nxc4 could follow 19 ... Qc8 20 Qxc8 Rfxc8 21 Ne5 Rc2 or 21 ... Bd5 and, despite being two pawns down, Black has a strong intiative.

19 ... Qc8 20 f5 Bd6 21 Qh5 Bxe5

Alapin defends himself badly, which, alas, happens with many chessplayers when they get into a difficult position. It was necessary to parry the threat of f6 by 21 ... f6 (22 Ng6 Re8 23 Qh8+ Kf7) with possibilities of stubborn resistance. Now, however, White obtains a mobile pawn phalanx, crossing the frontier, with which it is difficult to contend.

22 dxe5 f6

To allow f6 would mean being quickly mated.

23 e6 Qe8 24 Qg4 Qa4

He should decide on 24 ... a5, and if 25 Bb4 then 25 ... axb4 26 Rd7 Qxd7 27 exd7 Rad8.

25 Bb4!

This little combination again escaped Black's orbit of attention. Charousek, in this encounter, showed himself to be far and away more tactically aware than his opponent. The present game well illustrates the significance of tactics in the chess struggle.

25 ... Rfd8 26 Rxd8+ Rxd8 27 Be7 Rf8 28 Bxf8 Kxf8 29 Qh5 Qe8 30 Qh8+ 1:0

The knight on e5 has made everything "springtime" for White.

Queen's Gambit
White: **G.Maroczy**
Black: **E.Schiffers**
(Vienna 1898)

1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3 Nc3 Nf6 4 Bg5 Be7 5 Nf3 0-0 6 e3 Nbd7 7 Rc1 b6 8 cxd5 exd5 9 Bd3 Bb7 10 0-0 c5

All this is known to us from Pillsbury's Hastings games with Tarrasch and Schlechter.

11 Bb1 Re8

In connection with the following move, a manoeuvre which is important for defence of the h7 point. At the same time the rook also "gets to work".

12 Ne5 Nf8 13 f4

The ideal Pillsbury formation.
(see next diagram)

13 ... Ne4

Black solves a particular problem, striving to close the b1-h7 diagonal and thereby neutralise the influence of the White bishop which is deployed on it.

Without mentioning the fact that the knight f8 already limits, to a sufficient extent, the action of the bishop b1, Black does not find the planning "core" of the position, which consists of the need to loosen the position of the White knight on e5. If it is conceived that the knight has been driven away from the e5 square, then the weakness of the e3 pawn, located on the open e-file, will be highlighted. Black could then with advantage concentrate the action of his heavy pieces on this line. Consequently, Black's plan must consist of the removal of the White knight from its centralised position. The best attempt in this direction would be the move 13 ... N6d7. The attack 14 Qh5 is repulsed by the reply 14 ... g6, while after 14 Bxe7 Qxe7 (or 14 ... Rxe7) 15 Qg4 f6 16 Nxd7 Nxd7 17 Rce1 Qf7, Black's position is quite satisfactory. Thus 11 ... Re8 is the beginning of a correct plan of play against the "knight on e5", but with his last move Black misses the right way.

14 Bxe4! dxe4 15 Qb3 Ne6 16 Bxe7 Qxe7 17 d5 c4

The retreat 17 ... Nf8 would doom Black to a very cramped position after 18 Rfd1. In order to unravel his forces somewhat, he gives up the c-pawn and he cannot be blamed for this decision. One

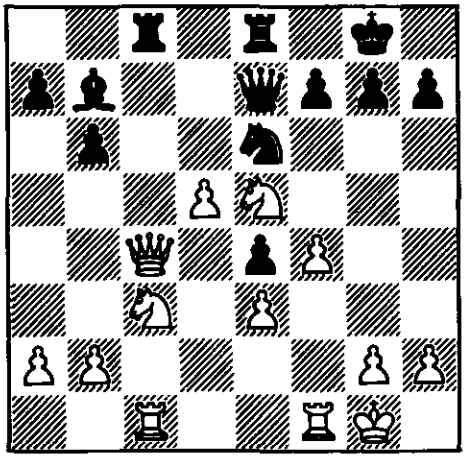
can only note that such a crucial move as 13 ... Ne4 needs to be thought out more carefully and made only when it is a link in the plan and not a tactical operation.

18 Qxc4 Rac8?

He should play 18 ... Nc5 or 18 ... Rec8. It turns out that, in sacrificing the pawn, Black again has not assessed the position sufficiently concretely.

The reader, recalling the principles of planning methods, laid down in the introduction under the sections "Concrete Ideas" and "Dynamics", will undoubtedly accuse Schiffers of insufficiently concrete ideas which led to his serious mistakes on the 13th and 18th moves.

Thus, again and again, we are convinced of the great significance a concrete approach to positions has in the creative process, i.e. the detailed thinking out of variations, realistic aims and a clear idea of the ways leading to them. Every chess player wishing to cultivate creative thinking must turn his attention to precisely this.



19 dxe6!

White wins two rooks and a knight for the queen. The stage of realisation of this material advantage does not last long, the more so that White also retains a considerably superior position.

19 ... Rxc4

There is also no comfort in 19 ... f6 20 Qb3 fxe5 21 f5.

20 exf7+ Kf8

The endgame after 20 ... Qxf7 21 Nxf7 Kxf7 22 Nb5 Rxc1 23 Rxc1 is hopeless for Black.

21 fxe8(Q)+ Kxe8 22 Nxc4 Ba6?

Black loses all his bearings and by now does not see "trifles".

23 Nxe4 Kf8 24 Ncd6 h6 25 f5 Qe5 26 f6 g5 27 Rc7 Qd5 28 Re1

Postponing the denouement for a few moves. 28 Rfc1 or 28 Re7 would have forced immediate resignation.

28 ... Kg8 29 Rg7+ Kf8 30 Re7 Kg8 31 f7+ Kg7 32 Re8 1:0

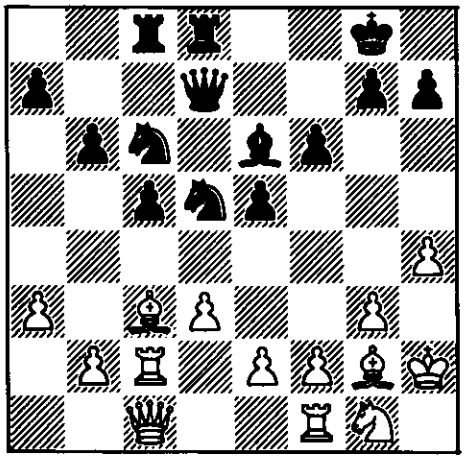
In the games we have looked at, the positions with the powerful centralised knight arose from one and the same opening - i.e. the Orthodox variation of the Queen's Gambit. In no way does this mean that the same idea cannot be carried out in other opening systems. White's plan includes the move Ne5, as one of its links, also in another branch of the Queen's Gambit, and (albeit more rarely) in other openings. By taking the

position of the knight on e5 from the Orthodox Variation, we only wish to demonstrate the role of the knight in the centre with classical examples.

A comparatively new idea is the deployment of the knight on the central d5 square (d4 for Black). The first plans involving this idea could be seen in games played at the beginning of the 20th century, but the widespread use of it came in the 30's, particularly after it was successfully employed in a number of Botvinnik's games.

Going back to history, we present two examples in which Black carried out a plan, full of initiative, involving an invasion of the knight on d4.

In the game **Mieses-Chigorin** from the Barmen tournament 1905 (the opening was a Sicilian for White), after 20 Ng1 the struggle arrived at the following position:



Black's plan consists of invading with the knight on d4, forcing White to take it, replying ... exd4 and then beginning an attack on the e2 pawn along the e-file. This plan was prepared with the advance of the pawns to c5 and e5 and consolidation of them with the moves ... b6 and ... f6 in case White were to attack the advanced pawns by b4 or f4. It should be noted that this "undermining" - as we call it - move is one of the principal methods against such plans.

The struggle continued:

20 ... Nde7 21 f4 Nd4

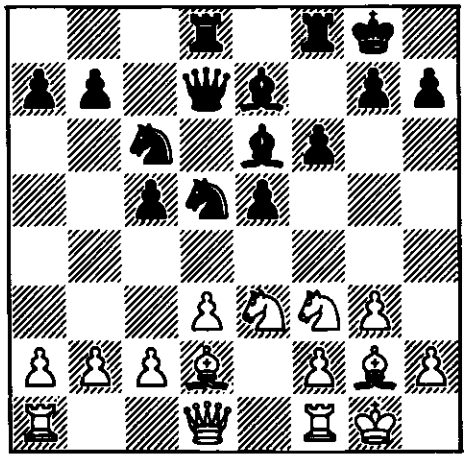
The same reply would have also followed on 21 b4.

22 Bxd4 exd4

Black threatens to invade the weak e3 square with his knight, via f5.

23 Be4 Bd5

A more consistent way to carry out the plan was 23 ... Bb3 24 Rd2 Nf5 25 Bxf5 Qxf5 followed by a doubling of rooks on the e-file. This variation was pointed out by Botvinnik, but also the continuation chosen by Chigorin leads to the objective. Black achieved victory on the 42nd move.



The very complicated position depicted above was obtained in the

game **Mieses-Billecard**, played in the international tournament at Ostende 1907.

The main difference here is that the White pawn stands not on e2, but on c2 (Mieses exchanged exd5, whereas in the game with Chigorin - cxd5) and this difference possibly plays even more into Black's hands.

Without the open c-file, the undermining move b4 loses its strength, indeed it is also more difficult to carry it out.

In the game followed

14 Qe1 Rfe8 15 Rd1

All White's pieces are crowded in the centre, but he has no apparent objective in view and the harmony of this arrangement is of a purely superficial character.

Soon White becomes aware of the futility of "harmony for the sake of harmony".

15 ... Bf8 16 Bc1 Nd4 17 Nd2?

He can save the pawn only by 17 Qd2, but also in this case White's position remains difficult.

17 ... Nb4

Of course 17 ... Nxe3 was also good.

18 Ne4 Nbxc2 19 Nxc2 Nxc2 20 Qc3 Nd4

It seems only now Mieses saw that on 21 Nxc5 Black replies simply 21 ... Qc8, creating two threats - to take the knight and ... Ne2+.

21 Rfe1 b6

White's position is hopeless, though he dragged on his resistance until the 44th move.

We look now at what plans, and what techniques of realising them are advanced on this theme in Soviet competitions.

English Opening
White: **V.Kirillov**
Black: **M.Botvinnik**
(7th USSR Championship 1931)

1 c4 c5 2 Nc3 Nf6 3 g3 d5

Since White has refrained from a quick advance of the queen's pawn to d4, Black first carries out an analogous advance in the centre, possibly already now nurturing a planned thought of invasion with the knight on d4 and a seige of this square on the basis of the two pawn chains a7-b6-c5 and e5-f6-g7.

4 cxd5 Nxd5 5 Bg2 Nc7

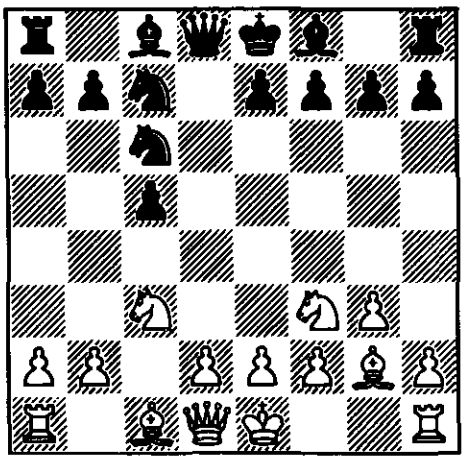
This retreat gives away Black's real idea. He actually does intend to carry out the plan, the outline of which was indicated in the previous note.

6 Nf3

Here 6 d3 is a cunning continuation, intending, on 6 ... Nc6, to reply 7 Bxc6+! bxc6 8 Qa4 followed by an attack on the c5 pawn by Be3, Ne4, Rc1 etc. Instead of 6 ... Nc6 Black best stops at 6 ... g6 and 7 ... Bg7, continuing to concentrate his attention on the d4 point.

6 ... Nc6

This position has been met many times and also in recent times.



7 0-0

White's plan must consist of pressure on the c5 pawn by Na4, Rc1, etc. in order to force ... b6 and thereby increase the activity of his king's bishop.

7 ... e5 8 b3 Be7 9 Bb2 0-0 10 Rc1 f6

Exactly the same position occurred in the game. Taimanov-Korchnoi, played 23 years later in 1954 in the 21st USSR Championship.

11 Ne1

This passive retreat would have been justified if White were to include in his plan, as one of the links, the move Bxc6. Taimanov continued 11 Na4 b6 12 Nh4 Nd5 13 a3 (preparing b4) 13 ... Bb7, and now White should play 13 Nf5 with the threat b4.

11 ... Bf5 12 Na4 Na6 13 Ba3 Qa5 14 Nc2 Rfd8 15 Ne3 Be6 16 d3?

Decisive inattentiveness, which allows Black to completely fulfil the plan of the knight invasion on the main "height" - the d4 point. Necessary was 16 Bxc6 bxc6 17 d3. The weaknesses on the c-file would rather hamper operations, on Black's part, on the king's flank. In any case, it is better to go in for the weakening of his own position, in view of the creation of real weaknesses in the opponent's camp, than to rely only on defence and thereby submit to the will of the opponent and totally hand over the initiative to him.

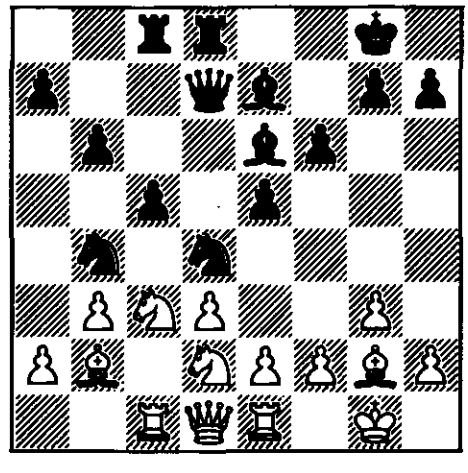
16 ... Rac8 17 Nc4 Qc7 18 Nd2 b6 19 Bb2

It is difficult for White to find an object for his manoeuvres - the first sign that the opponent has seized the initiative.

19 ... Qd7 20 Re1 Nd4 21 Nc3 Nb4

The plan is fulfilled and now comes the concluding stage to realise the positional advantage.

Botvinnik assessed the present position like this: "Black has achieved ideal positions for his pieces and pawns. His knights cannot be attacked, since the moves a3 and e3 would only ruin White's position."



22 Nf3?

Leading to a quick defeat, but also after 22 a3 Nbc6 23 e3 Nf5 24 Bf1 Na5 White must perish sooner or later. There is the threat if only of the manoeuvre ... Qe8-f7.

22 ... Nxa2! 23 Nxd4 Nxc3 24 Rxc3 cxd4 25 Rxc8 Rxc8 26 e3 Bb4 27 Re2 Bc3 28 exd4 Bxb2 29 Rxb2 Qxd4 30 Ra2 a5 31 Ra4 Qc3 32 Rh4 Qc1 0:1

Sicilian Defence
White: **G.Levenfish**
Black: **G.Lisitsin**
(Moscow 1935)

1 c4 Nf6 2 Nc3 c5 3 Nf3 g6

Black leads the game into one of the set-ups of the Sicilian Defence called the "Dragon Variation" (the pawn configuration resembles the position of the stars in the Dragon constellation).

In the usual form of this variation, White's pawn is still on c2, but even in this case Black strives for the move ... d5, relieving the situation around the d5 point, the pressure on which by White, is felt very strongly even without the pawn on c4. All the more reason why Black, instead of a stereotyped arrangement of pieces and pawns, should play ... d5.

4 d4

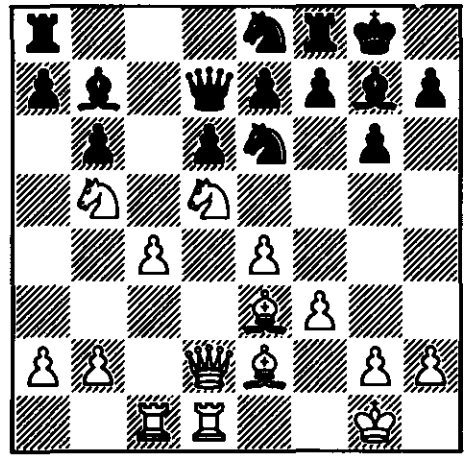
White outstrips Black in the clash over the central squares. From this moment, the game becomes surprisingly similar to the game Kirillov-Botvinnik, the only difference being that Levenfish now carries out Botvinnik's plan with White, while Lisitsin repeats Kirillov's method of defence with Black.

White now plays directly for the setting up of a cavalry outpost on d5.

4 ... cxd4

Also here it was still possible to complicate White's task by 4 ... Bg7 5 dxc5 Qa5. However, neither here nor later, does Black prevent the opponent from placing his forces "à la Botvinnik".

5 Nxd4 Bg7 6 e4 d6 7 Be2 0-0 8 0-0 Nbd7 9 Be3 Nc5 10 f3 b6 11 Qd2 Bb7 12 Rfd1 Ne6 13 Rac1 Qd7 14 Ndb5 Ne8 15 Nd5



It is necessary to look now at the position occuring after the 21st move in the game Kirillov-Botvinnik. White's arrangement of pieces and pawns is very similar in both cases, only Botvinnik's b-pawn was advanced to b6, whereas Levenfish's is still on its original square.

It is interesting that Levenfish achieves this type of piece arrangement already on the 16th move,

while Botvinnik only on the 22nd move. This is explained by the fact that Botvinnik's queen got to d7 in three moves, Levenfish's to d2 - in one move; Botvinnik's knight transferred from g8 to b4 in five moves, Levenfish's from g1 to b5 - in three; finally Botvinnik's bishop reached the e6 square in two steps, Levenfish's e3 - in one.

Curiously, these six moves for Kirillov have been wasted for nothing. It is clear why Levenfish's position is more capable of defence than Kirillov's position. Thus many chessplayers unwittingly squander an important element of the struggle - time - in vain. Make the most of time - this legacy of Morphy, Chigorin, Alekhine must be placed at the basis of enterprising chess thoughts.

15 ... N8c7 16 Nbc3

Under the cover of his threateningly placed knight on d5, White intends to launch an attack by f4-f5 or f4 and then e5. It is dangerous for Black to stick to waiting tactics, and he decides to take the knight d5, though this also leads to the creation of new weaknesses in his camp.

16 ... Nxd5 17 cxd5 Nc7 18 a4 Ba6

A positionally unjustified exchange, which decisively weakens the c6 square, where White's pieces will soon also be heading. Generally speaking, it is necessary for Black to hold on more actively, otherwise, little by little, White will simply run all over him. He should contemplate formulating a plan which entails the break ... f5 or the advance of the e-pawn.

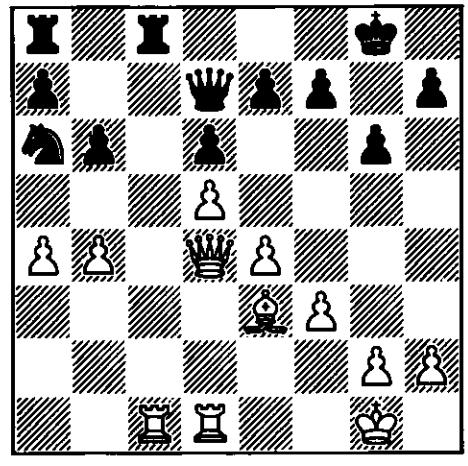
19 b4 Bxe2 20 Nxe2 Na6 21 Nd4 Bxd4

It is painful to make such an exchange, but he cannot allow the knight to c6. However, even now it is not very nice: on c6 is not a gaping hole, but a real abyss.

22 Qxd4

Threatening Bh6.

22 ... Rfc8



23 Rc6!

The problem is solved. Black cannot allow the capture of the c-file and is forced to exchange on c6. Thus the modest pawn on c2, beginning its procession with the first move, after a little diversion gets to c6 and sticks like a bayonet into the heart of the opponent.

23 ... Rxc6 24 dxc6 Qe6

It is not difficult to see that the passed pawn on c6 has been created as a result of the knight invasion on d5.

Transferring from stage to stage, White's plan now approaches the

area of realisation of the advantage which has been achieved.

25 Qc3 Nc7 26 Ra1 Rc8 27 Qd3 d5 28 Rc1 f5 29 Bf4! dxe4 30 fxe4 Ne8

It turns out that, after 30 ... fxe4, White wins the knight by 31 Qd7. Also miserable is 30 ... Qxe4, because of the same 31 Qd7. All this - is a consequence of the menacing pawn on c6, which deprives the opponent of sufficient freedom of activity.

31 exf5 gxf5 32 b5 Kf7 33 Rf1 Ng7 34 Bd2 Rf8 35 Re1 Qc8 36 Bb4 Re8

The Black pieces are constrained and White must gain victory without difficulty. However, at this moment, he mistakenly, apparently under the influence of time-trouble (in the 2nd Moscow international tournament the control was 2½ hours for the first 37 moves), transposed to the endgame by

37 Qd7?

37 Qd4, with the threats of Bxe7 and Bc3, led to victory. On the best 37 ... Qc7 would have followed 38 Bc3 Ne6 39 Qd5, or 38 ... Nh5 39 Qh4, or, finally, 38 ... Rg8 39 Qc4+ Kf8 40 Bb4.

After the transposition to the ending

37 ... Qxd7 38 cxd7 Rd8 39 Rxe7+

the game loses interest for our theme. Lisitsin put up further quite stubborn resistance and laid down his arms only on the 62nd move.

We look at one more game, brilliantly illustrating the role of the centralised knight on d5.

Reti Opening
White: **M.Botvinnik**
Black: **A.Lilienthal**
(Moscow 1936)

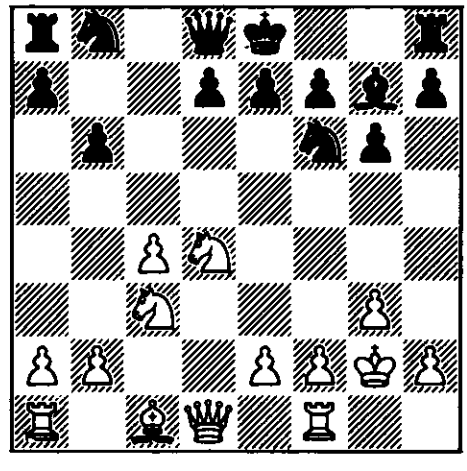
1 Nf3 Nf6 2 c4 b6 3 g3 Bb7 4 Bg2 c5 5 0-0 g6

A good plan, also frequently employed with success in the international tournament at Marienbad (Marianske-Lazne) 1925. By crossing the centre with the two bishops, Black threatens to obtain predominant influence over it. This forces White to submit to the exchange of the white-squared bishops, which leads to a slight weakening of his castled position.

6 d4 cxd4 7 Nxd4 Bxg2 8 Kxg2 Bg7 9 Nc3

White intends to play e4 in order to occupy the d5 square.

9 ... 0-0?



Black ignores the opponent's plan, which bears witness to his insufficiently concrete assessment of the position.

2½ months later, the same position was met in the international tournament at Nottingham, in the game Capablanca-Botvinnik. The latter played 9 ... Qc8, attacking the c4 pawn. There followed 10 b3 Qb7+ 11 f3 d5 12 cxd5 Nxd5 13 Nxd5 Qxd5 14 Bb2 0-0 15 Qd3 Rfd8 16 Rfd1 Nd7 and a draw was agreed on the 29th move.

10 e4!

White immediately exploits the opponent's routine play (with his last move, Black "completed" his development). The plan of the knight invasion on d5 really takes shape.

10 ... Nc6 11 Be3 Qc8 12 b3 Qb7 13 f3 Rfd8 14 Rac1 Rac8 15 Qd2 a6

Preparing ... b5, in order to rather weaken White's pressure on the "critical" (the object of the plan) d5 point and, by opening the c-file, to begin a clash of heavy pieces on it, which would give new direction to the struggle.

Black's concrete idea consists of the variation 16 ... Nxd4 17 Bxd4 b5, but even in this case he would run into difficulties after 18 Bxf6 and 19 Nd5 with the threat e5. Therefore Black would have to look for some sort of prophylactic move before deciding on ... b5, but this would also have allowed White to take appropriate measures against the advance of the b-pawn.

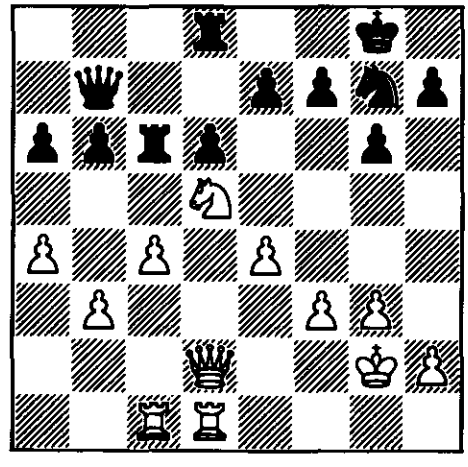
16 Rfd1 Nxd4 17 Bxd4 d6

Black has a difficult position. An immediate ... b5, as indicated earlier, is dangerous. It was possible to take the d5 square under control by the move ... e6, but after 18 a4 Black would again find himself in a blind alley, since, as it is not difficult to see, 18 ... d5 leads to the loss of a pawn, while the f6 and d6 points serve as new objects for attack.

18 a4 Ne8

Black's plan is not very clear. You see, the exchange of bishops only increases White's chances on the king's flank. Besides this, the knight is, as it were, excluded from events on the queen's flank. Undoubtedly more active was 18 ... Nd7. The Black knight, reaching c5, would fulfil the functions of both attack and defence. Finally, also possible was the tactical plan with 18 ... h5, and if 19 Nd5 then 19 ... Nxd5 20 exd5 e5 21 dxe6 fxe6, and the game is sharpened, in view of the possibilities on the f-file. Now, however, Black finally concedes the d5 square to the White knight.

19 Nd5 Rc6 20 Bxg7 Nxg7



White has fulfilled the basic part of the plan: to invade with the knight on d5 and secure, more or less firmly, this central position for it. Can one say that he has achieved a positional advantage? Of course!

Already in a number of examples, we have been convinced of the significance of the knight, if it is firmly established in the centre. At the same time, the invasion of the knight on d5 - is not an end in itself, but only an important step in the concluding stage of the plan - the realisation of the advantage which has been achieved.

Thus, White is now posed with the question: how can he exploit the strong position of the knight? It is not apparent what operation White can undertake on the queen's flank under the aegis of the knight on d5. Here White should only be watchful that Black does not "on the sly" carry out the break ... b5. Obviously, White has the better chances on the king's flank or in the centre, in connection with the possible opening of the c-file.

It is interesting that the move 21 e5 is possible at once. Black cannot take the pawn in view of Nxe7+ or Nf6+. The best, if not the only defence was 21 ... Ne6. Further events could develop like this: 22 Re1 dxe5 23 Rxe5 Rcd6 24 Qh6 b5, and, little by little, counter chances are created for Black. White plays in a more subtle way. He strives to rivet the knight to the g7 square.

21 h4!

Now, on the removal of the knight to e8 or e6, follows h5.

21 ... Re8!

Black defends against the threat e5, which, after the move 21 h4, gains still more in strength. Now it is necessary for White to once again exploit the advantage of his position.

22 Rc3 Nh5

Probably intending, even if at the cost of a significant weakening of the pawn chain, to remove White's central knight after ... Nf6.

23 Qd4

He should continue 23 Rd3, to prevent the move ... Nf6.

23 ... b5?

A mistake. It was possible to play 23 ... Nf6, because the variation 24 Nxf6+ exf6 25 Qxf6 is unfavourable for White in view of 25 ... d5! On 23 ... Nf6, correct is 24 Rfc1 or 24 Re1, and, as before, the move ... b5 is not possible.

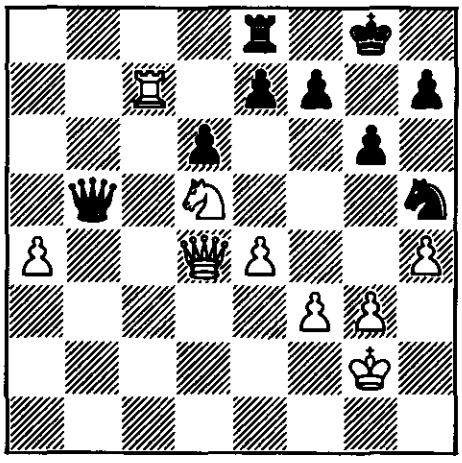
Now, however, White, having created a positional advantage, further achieves also a material superiority. The reason why Black decides to prematurely provoke a crisis in the struggle lies apparently in psychological instability, which is evoked by the difficulties of a protracted defence.

24 cxb5 axb5 25 Rdc1! Rxc3 26 Rxc3 bxa4

If 26 ... e6, White has 27 Rc7

followed by Ne7+.

27 Rc7 Qb5 28 bxa4



White prefers to transpose play into the endgame, which is won comparatively easily, rather than trouble himself with worries about the opponent's passed pawn after 28 Nxe7+ Rxe7 29 Rxe7 axb3. However, the Black king and knight are so badly placed that even here the way to the win would be quick and uncomplicated, for example 30 Rc7!, threatening not only mate, but also Qb2 followed by Rc3. If 30 ... Qe2+, then 31 Qf2, and the b3 pawn is lost. On 30 ... Qb8, decisive is 31 Qc3.

28 ... Qe2+ 29 Qf2 Qxf2+ 30 Kxf2 e6 31 Nb6 ... (1:0, 44)

We have convinced ourselves, by a number of examples, what a powerful positional role the knight plays when it is established on one of the central squares.

However, the theme "knight in the centre" represents only a part, and besides not the main, problem of the centre as a whole. Principal consideration in a set plan needs to be given to the question of pawn play in the centre.

Even in the last century, the stars of the epoch, with Steinitz at their head, formulated the most important positional concept - "the pawn centre" and revealed its enormous significance when carrying out active plans in the central stage of the game.

Pawns placed on the central squares e4, d4 (e5, d5) are called the pawn centre.

Two central pawns, standing side by side, hold under their influence four squares on the next rank. Thus the presence of the pawn centre for one of the sides predetermines a certain territorial achievement, which to some extent hampers the opponent, while in specific conditions might serve as a guarantee for a threatening attack. The advance of the pawn centre sometimes causes real disarray in the enemy camp, particularly when a counterattack against such a breakthrough group proves unsuccessful. The pawn centre gains in strength when there is harmony between it and the piece-forces. If pawn support is required to consolidate a knight in the centre, then here the pawns need the support of pieces.

When the pawn centre advances, it loses touch with its own rear and draws closer to the superior strength of the opponent. Therefore an attacking march of the

central pawns - is a highly responsible operation, which must be weighed up as accurately and deeply as possible. Failure, usually taking the form of an annihilation of the breakthrough group, is virtually equivalent to defeat. On the other hand, success, for the most part, guarantees victory.

A good illustration of the strength and weakness of the pawn centre, breaking through, is served by the following variation of the Alekhine Defence:

1 e4 Nf6

Black agrees to delay his development, but in return induces the White pawns to lose touch with their forces, considerably weakening the central squares in their camp and exposing the position of the White king.

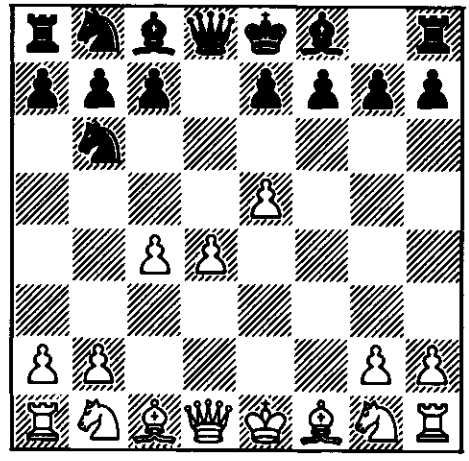
2 e5 Nd5 3 c4 Nb6 4 d4

If the White pawn were standing on e4, his pawn centre would be stronger and Black's position cramped. From this it is seen how a pawn advance contains a positional minus.

4 ... d6 5 f4

Consistent, but exposing the White king even more and weakening the e3 and e4 squares in the centre. In return, White's central pawn chain spreads its influence over many squares in the opponent's territory. If he succeeds in maintaining the pawn centre and completing his development, then he will achieve an overwhelming advantage, but Black quickly organises an attack on the weak pawns and the struggle assumes an extremely sharp character.

5 ... dxe5 6 fxe5



6 ... c5

Black himself forces the opponent's central pawns to advance. 6 ... Bf5 is a well-analysed theoretical continuation, but in precisely this case White succeeds in stabilising the position with his pawn group in the centre, and Black has to manoeuvre for a long time in very restricted space. This makes it very difficult for him to plan his game.

7 d5 e6 8 Nc3

8 d6 is unsatisfactory, if only because of 8 ... Qh4+.

8 ... exd5 9 cxd5

White's pawn centre has shifted to the fifth rank and continues to remain mobile. However, in a number of games, Black managed to avert the danger which might hang over his king.

9 ... Qh4+ 10 g3 Qd4

Black has surrounded and attacked White's pawns which are breaking through. The tension of

the struggle has reached its height.

11 Bb5+ Bd7?

He could fight on by 11 ... Kd8 12 Bg5+ Be7.

12 Qe2!

The best and probably a winning continuation of the attack. In a few games White played 12 Bxd7+? and ... lost because of the weakness of the pawns.

12 ... Nxd5

White's last move seemed to be bad precisely because of this capture. We mention, incidentally, that 12 ... a6 is not good because of 13 e6 Bxb5 14 exf7+ Kd8 15 Bg5+ Kc7 16 Nxb5+ axb5 17 Bf4+.

13 e6!

Now Black's position caves in.

13 ... Bxb5 14 Nxb5 Qb4+ 15 Bd2

And White's attack after 15 ... Qxb2 16 exf7+ Kxf7 17 Qh5+ is irresistible.

Already from what has been said it is clear that the plan of struggle against the pawn centre is broken down into two stages: slowing down the advance of the centre, and then, after solving the first problem, organising an attack on it. It is appropriate to mention that, with such a blockaded centre, the game might be carried over also to the flanks. However, it is best not to allow the opponent to create a pawn centre, particularly when it is located on the open files.

The pawn centre is such a major positional factor that, because of it, the struggle commences already with the first opening moves.

Usually the side enjoying the initiative in this struggle is White, since, already with his first moves, he can maintain one of his pawns in the centre. The strategy of Black's opening plan is, for the most part, directed towards the establishment of pawn equilibrium in the centre. Therefore the creation of a pawn centre is a very complicated operation for White, if Black watches his opening moves closely. This occurs in the French Defence (1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 and already there is equilibrium), the Sicilian Defence (1 e4 c5, preventing the move d4; if now 2 c3, then 2 ... Nf6 or 2 ... d5, decisively obstructing White's plan), the Nimzovich Defence (1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 e6 3 Nc3 Bb4, and Black succeeds in preventing the formation of White pawns in the centre; he still has the move ... d5 in reserve) and many other openings.

And yet White (and at other times also Black!) sometimes succeeds in creating a pawn centre as a result of the opening struggle. Here are a few examples.

Queen's Gambit Accepted
White: **M.Botvinnik**
Black: **G.Levenfish**
(Moscow 1935)

1 d4 d5 2 c4 dxc4

Black has the possibility of

transferring to the central stage with a more or less reasonable game, but he requires an excellent understanding of the problems facing him. The fact of the matter is that, after the removal of the Black pawn from d5, White threatens to build up a pawn centre. S.Tarrasch even considered the move 2 ... dxc4 to be a surrender of the centre and invariably gave it a question mark. This evaluation, however, is dogmatic. Black has quite a few ways of preventing the advance e4, indeed the position of the d4 pawn is also not absolutely stable, in view of the possible breaks ... c5 and ... e5. Of course the replies 2 ... c6 or 2 ... e6, consolidating the d5 pawn, facilitate Black's struggle in the centre, but lead to a comparatively quiet game in which it is difficult for him to obtain counter-attacking chances. The move 2 ... dxc4, however, allows a sharpening of the struggle. In the tense situation created after accepting the gambit, Black can exploit a number of combinational motifs. Thus if White now plays directly for the pawn centre 3 e4, then he obtains nothing in view of the reply 3 ... e5 (4 dxe5 Qxd1+ 5 Kxd1 Be6 and then ... Nc6 with hopes of seizing the initiative). On 3 Nc3, in the game Capablanca-I. Rabinovich (Moscow 1925) Black replied 3 ... a6 and after 4 a4 e5! obtained a position with excellent prospects.

3 Nf3 Nf6

Beginning the struggle around the move e4.

4 Qa4+ c6

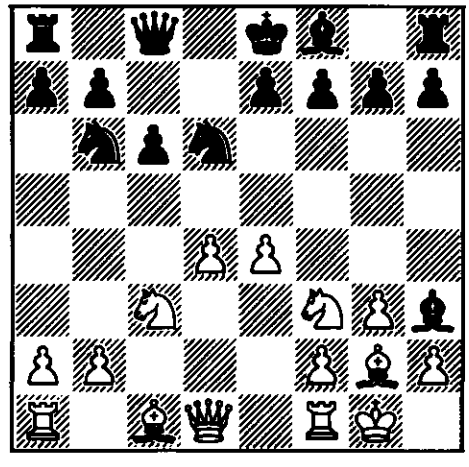
By threatening to defend the pawn by ... b5, Black forces his opponent to spend time on capturing the pawn. If 4 ... Nbd7, then 5 Nc3 and the move e4 cannot be prevented.

5 Qxc4 Bf5! 6 Nc3 Nbd7 7 g3 Ne4 8 Bg2 Nd6

A tempting decision, but now the struggle against e4 is made difficult. On 8 ... Ndf6 would have followed 9 Ne5, and White once again draws closer to the cherished advance of the e-pawn. Black could have put up a more successful resistance by 8 ... Nxc3 9 bxc3 Be4.

9 Qa4 Nb6 10 Qd1 Qc8 11 0-0 Bh3 12 e4

At last!



12 ... Bxg2 13 Kxg2

Black's position is not easy. White has built up a pawn centre and a mobile one at that, as a consequence of which his piece-army also threatens to advance. Black lags behind seriously in

development (this is also not surprising, since, out of his first ten moves, he has made five with the knight), his king is detained in the centre - it all foreshadows an impending denouement.

13 ... e6 14 d5

The question, as to whether he should hurry with the opening of the game or continue to systematically increase the pressure resulting from the pawn centre, presents itself a a purely strategical problem. Both plans are justified and the choice of one of them, in the present position, depends more on the style and creative direction of the chessplayer.

14 ... Be7 15 e5 Nb5 16 d6

And White's advantage is quite obvious. Admittedly, the process of realisation still requires quite a long time.

A brilliant illustration of the influence of the pawn centre upon the whole area of the struggle is provided by the following game:

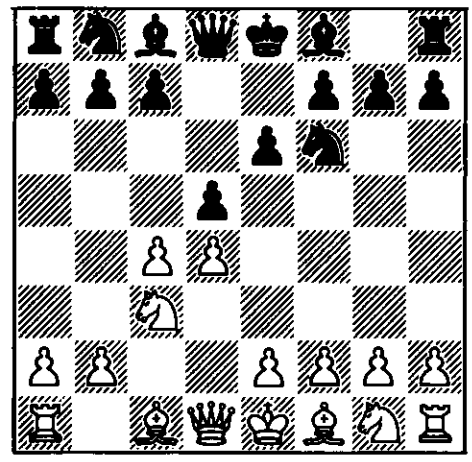
Queen's Gambit
White: **E.Geller**
Black: **V.Simagin**
(19th USSR Championship 1951)

1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3 Nc3 Nf6
(see next diagram)

A classical position of pawn equilibrium in the centre.

4 Nf3

There is a great choice of moves here for White. 4 Bg5 would continue the orthodox line in this



variation.

4 ... c5 5 cxd5

Either this, or 5 e3 - otherwise the pawn equilibrium will be upset to Black's advantage, for example 5 Bg5 cxd4 6 Nxd4 e5!

5 ... Nxd5 6 e3

White could form a pawn centre at once by playing 6 e4. However, after 6 ... Nxc3 7 bxc3 cxd4 8 cxd4 Bb4+ 9 Bd2 Bxd2+ or 9 ... Qa5 followed by ... Bxd2+, occur numerous exchanges and this is not to everyone's taste. Nevertheless the presence of a pawn centre for White sets Black certain difficulties.

In the 18th game of the return-match for the world championship title between Alekhine and Euwe, followed 9 ... Bxd2+ 10 Qxd2 0-0 11 Bc4 Nc6 12 0-0 b6 13 Rfd1 Bb7 14 Qf4 Rc8 15 d5! exd5 16 Bxd5 Qe7, when, by continuing 17 Qf5 with the threat Ng5, White could have obtained promising attacking chances. However, Alekhine played 17 Ng5 and Euwe defended himself cleverly by 17 ... Ne5 18 Bxb7 Ng6!

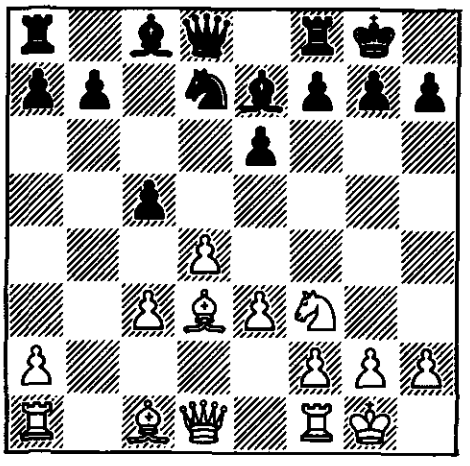
With the move 6 e3, White does not refrain from the plan of building up a pawn centre, but wants to realise this in more favourable conditions.

6 ... Be7 7 Bd3 Nxc3

An interesting moment. If we look at this exchange as a separate tactical operation, then it should be condemned. It also gave rise to criticism by commentators of the game on the grounds that Black, firstly, strengthens White's pawn group in the centre and makes it easier for him to form a pawn centre, and, secondly, opens the b-file and thereby increases the active possibilities of the White pieces on the queen's flank.

But nevertheless these considerations do not give grounds to criticise the exchange made by Black, which in fact is a very important link in his contemplated plan. Relying on the pawn tension "d4-c5" (pawn tension - is an arrangement of pawns whereby they attack each other), Black intended to concentrate the action of his heavy pieces on the c-file, and then, by taking on d4 at a suitable moment, to begin active play on this file. It is unfavourable for White to eliminate the tension himself by dxc5, since after this the c4 point and the c3 pawn turn out to be potential weaknesses for him, subject to attack by the opponent. Consequently, when evaluating a move, it is necessary above all to establish whether or not it is a link in the plan and only then to look at its indefinite tactical significance for the given position.

8 bxc3 Nd7 9 0-0 0-0



10 e4

White claims his right to the centre, but the advance 11 d5, for the present, is not dangerous for Black. On this follows 11 ... e5, and the action of White's king's bishop will be limited by its own pawn chain. True, White obtains a well consolidated passed pawn in the centre, but Black's pieces (particularly the knight) can blockade it effectively from the d6 square, at the same time exerting strong pressure on the opponent's position. However, White is not obliged to play d5. He has formed a pawn centre and under its cover could strive to create more active play on one of the flanks. To counterbalance this, Black must try to organise an attack on the c-file.

10 ... b6

This move enters into Black's plan, but is made at the wrong time. He should first play 10 ...

Qc7, so as not to allow the development of the bishop on f4. At the same time the queen move would assist in the carrying out of the main task - to concentrate fire on the c-file.

11 Bf4 Bb7 12 Qe2

Now Black has nowhere to place his queen and he experiences difficulties in connection with this.

12 ... g6

A good idea - transferring the black-squared bishop to the long diagonal to increase his piece influence in the centre and, in particular, to attack the d4 pawn.

13 Rfd1 cxd4?

Now the exchange 7 ... Nxc3 can be positively censured, since Black gives up the pawn tension without carrying out appropriate preparations to seize the c-file. Soon it becomes clear that not Black, but White, will occupy the opened file and, possessing the pawn centre, will easily achieve a positional advantage.

The consistent continuation was 13 ... Bf6, not fearing 14 dxc5 in view of 14 ... Nxc5 15 e5 Qc7. True, White could reply 14 Bd6 and Black would have to return with the bishop to e7, but this was sufficient to neutralise White's swoop.

14 cxd4 Bf6 15 Rac1

The invasion of the rook on c7 threatens a great deal of trouble and in the meantime Black can only postpone, but not prevent it.

15 ... Rc8 16 Ba6 Bxa6 17 Qxa6 Rxc1

On 17 ... Ra8, Black would likewise concede the open file under even worse conditions. White would play not an immediate 18 Rc7, because of 18 ... e5, but at first 18 Bd6. Simply 18 Rc2 was also good, doubling on the c-file.

18 Rxc1 Qa8 19 Bd6 Rd8 20 e5 Bg7 21 Rc7

White has got everything he wants: occupation of the open line and invasion on it into the opponent's camp; invasion with the bishop on to the sixth rank; capture of the centre and harmonious action of his pieces. All these woes have befallen Black as a result of the serious planning error on the 13th move.

21 ... Qe4

Of course, this sortie with a lone queen cannot help matters.

22 Nd2

He could not play 22 Rxd7 because of 22 ... Qb1+, but now Black will be constantly threatened with this combination.

22 ... Qe1+ 23 Nf1 Nf8 24 Qxa7 Bh6 25 Rxf7

White's pieces create havoc on the seventh rank. Black puts up further resistance through inertia.

25 ... Qb1 26 Qe7 Rc8 27 Rxh7 Nxh7 28 Qxe6+ Kg7 29 Qd7+ Kg8 30 Qxc8+ Kg7 31 Qc7+ Kg8 32 e6 1:0

We look at one more example,

which is not only extremely instructive but also brilliant in content and form, and which illustrates a breakthrough with the central pawn phalanx, brought about by the creative inspiration of Alekhine.

Blumenfeld Gambit
White: **S.Tarrasch**
Black: **A.Alekhine**
(Pistyan 1922)
1 d4 Nf6 2 Nf3 e6 3 c4 c5 4 d5 b5

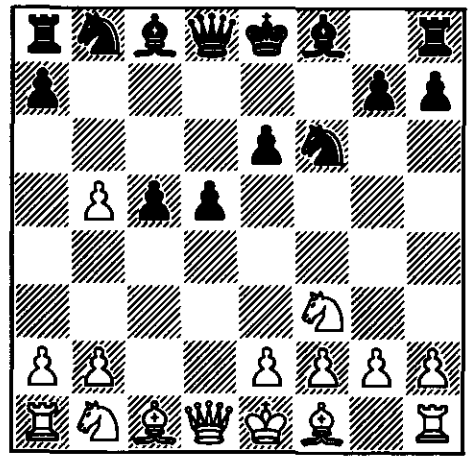
The idea, lying at the basis of this sudden pawn sacrifice, is to pursue the aim of creating a well-fortified mobile pawn centre. Here, the positional advantage (pawn centre), as it were, offsets the material advantage (extra pawn).

Admittedly, practice has shown that, instead of accepting the sacrifice, it is better for White to continue 5 Bg5. By pinning the knight, he strengthens the d5 pawn, which cramps Black, and threatens to form a pawn phalanx in the centre himself, after e4.

In the game Dus Chotimirsky-Levenfish (Moscow vs. Leningrad match 1922), Black tried to defend himself by 5 ... bxc4, but after 6 e4 Ba6 7 Nc3 Qa5 White could have given the opponent irresistible difficulties. For example, if 8 ... d6, then 9 dxe6 fxe6 10 Be2 Be7 11 0-0 0-0 12 e5 dxe5 13 Nxe5 with an overwhelming initiative.

Black also suffered a reverse in the game Grunfeld-Bogolyubov, (Vienna 1922), where, after 5 ... h6 6 Bxf6 Qxf6 7 Nc3 b4 8 Nb5 Na6 9 e4, he tried taking the b2 pawn with the queen and lost quickly. By continuing 9 ... e5, with the aim of locking the position (10 d6 Bb7), Black could put up resistance but his position nevertheless remains cramped.

5 dxe6 fxe6 6 cxb5 d5



7 e3

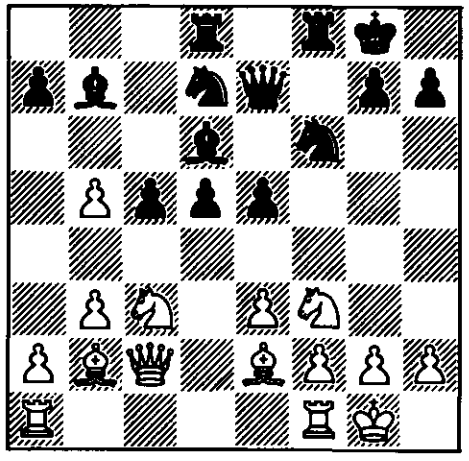
A very passive plan. White simply develops his pieces without thinking about countering the main link in Black's plan - the advance ... e5. His task would undoubtedly be made difficult if White were to play now Bf4 or Bg5. It is unfavourable for Black to win back the pawn 7 ... Qa5+ 8 Qd2 Qxb5 in view of 9 e4. In the event of 7 Bg5 Nbd7, possible is 8 Nbd2 and if 8 ... e5?, then 9 e4.

7 ... Bd6

Naturally! The pawn sacrifice has fully justified itself. Black now carries out the advance of the e-pawn without difficulty, while the bishops are placed on adjacent

diagonals, where they will rake the centre and White's king's side castled position. After the march of the pawn ... e5-e4, the knight f3 will have to look for another haven, after which the h2 and g2 points become real weaknesses.

8 Nc3 0-0 9 Be2 Bb7 10 b3 Nbd7 11 Bb2 Qe7 12 0-0 Rad8



A full mobilisation of forces. The entire Black army has been marshalled behind the three-pawn central phalanx, ready for a ramming campaign against the opponent. All this has been achieved at the cost of a single pawn.

However formidable the storm hanging over White's position may be, he intends to meet it fully armed. Tarrasch organises a well-composed plan of defence of the king's "fortress".

13 Qc2 e5

The offensive begins. The threat is ... e4 with a subsequent attack on the h2 point. In order to defend it, he needs to transfer the knight, via d2, to f1. First he must move the rook away - but where? Only to e1, since the d1 square, though on an open file, must be occupied by the knight, in order to defend the f2 square which is dangerously weakened after the removal of the king's rook. And so White's immediate defensive operation consists of the moves Rfe1, Nd1 and the manoeuvre Nd2-f1.

Nevertheless there remains a vulnerable point in White's defence - the g2 square. In the end it is precisely here where Black aims his blow, but the effectiveness of this blow will, all the same, be based on the breakthrough of the pawn centre.

14 Rfe1 e4 15 Nd2 Ne5

Black threatens a direct attack on the f2 and h2 points after each of the Black knights goes to g4.

16 Nd1 Nfg4 17 Bxg4 Nxg4 18 Nf1 Qg5

White has succeeded in firmly defending the f2 and h2 points, but Black begins to prepare an attack on the g2 square. Included in his plan is the knight manoeuvre ... Nh6-f5-h4. Other threats are also growing, such as ... Rf3! In short it is difficult to put up with the knight on g4; he has to make a move which weakens his position.

19 h3 Nh6 20 Kh1 Nf5 21 Nh2

Also securing the defence of the g2 point (21 ... Nh4 22 Rg1).

21 ... d4!

But now comes the advance in the centre, after which the White defence caves in. The basis of this advance is the weakening of the g3 point. On 22 exd4 follows 22 ... e3

and a decisive invasion of the Black pieces on g3 cannot be averted.

22 Bc1 d3 23 Qc4+ Kh8 24 Bb2

There is already no satisfactory defence. In this way, White at least averts the double attack of the queen from the e5 square, which is threatened in several variations. For example, if 24 Bd2, then 24 ... Ng3+ 25 Kg1 (25 fxg3 Qxg3 26 Ng4 Qxe1+ and mate on the following move) 25 ... Ne2+ 26 Kh1 Qe5.

24 ... Ng3+ 25 Kg1 Bd5

Black is not content with the win of the exchange after 25 ... d2.

26 Qa4 Ne2+ 27 Kh1 Rf7 28 Qa6 h5 29 b6 Ng3+ 30 Kg1 axb6 31 Qxb6 d2

This is where a mobile part of a pawn centre sometimes breaks through! Now Black wins the exchange, creating a mating attack.

32 Rf1 Nxf1 33 Nxf1 Be6 34 Kh1 Bxh3

All this - is a consequence of the powerful role which the pawn centre plays. Also now the e and d pawns disorganise the whole of White's defence.

35 gxh3 Rf3 36 Ng3 h4 37 Bf6

Allowing himself the possibility of losing "beautifully".

37 ... Qxf6 38 Nxe4 Rxh3+ 0:1

Black's pawn on d2 serves as a tacit reproach for White's decision to accept the opening sacrifice.

In several contemporary opening systems, for example in the King's Indian Defence, attempts are made to prove that the construction of a pawn centre, if it is pinned down, is not so dangerous and that danger is only threatened by the side having the mobile pawn centre. Adherents to this view obviously reckon that it is always possible to counter the static pawn centre with flank operations, while the centre itself is troubled from the side. However, the fact of the matter is that in flank battles the chances, for the most part, arise for the player who controls the centre.

The danger of disregarding an immobile centre are well illustrated by the following game:

King's Indian Defence
White: **S.Zhukhovitsky**
Black: **M.Taimanov**
½-final 25th USSR Championship

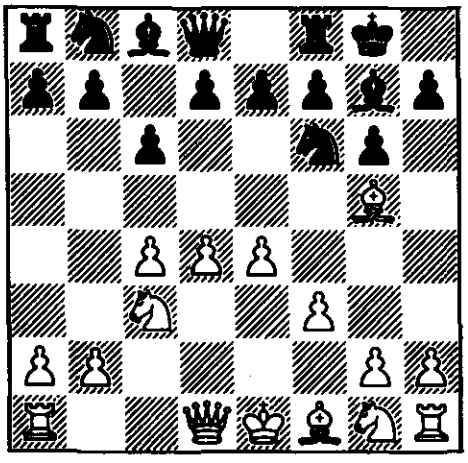
1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 g6 3 Nc3 Bg7

As distinct from the Grünfeld Defence (3 ... d5), where, to a certain extent, the White pawn centre turns out to be an object of attack, in the present variation of the King's Indian Defence it is strong and solid but, in return, not dynamic.

4 e4 0-0 5 f3 c6 6 Bg5

White has a three-pawn phalanx in the centre, and it is not possible to loosen this menacing wall with a counter-advance of central pawns. Consequently, he is guaranteed a

supremacy in the centre for quite some time to come.



Some compensation for Black is provided by his very good development of pieces on the king's flank. His plan will consist of removing if only the c4 pawn from White's pawn group in the centre. However the e4 and d4 pawns remain in their dominating positions and this allows White to soon launch an attack on the king's flank.

6 ... a6

With the aim of playing ... b5. This artificial and not very effective plan was also tried in the third Botvinnik-Smyslov match - but Smyslov had no success with it. This also is clear - such a plan runs counter to the classical principle of a quick and purposeful development of pieces.

Black should proceed along proven ways and try to prepare the move ... e5 by ... d6, ... Qc7 and ... Nbd7.

7 Qd2 b5 8 h4

The already known to us attacking march of the rook's pawn, which, thanks to the advance of the g6 pawn, guarantees the opening of the end file.

8 ... bxc4 9 Bh6

Also a type of exchange, evoked by the weakening of the approach to the Black king's position. But nevertheless the natural 9 Bxc4 (or 9 e5 and then Nxc4) should be preferred to this sacrifice of a pawn.

9 ... d5 10 h5

An interesting development of the attack, linked to beautiful mating variations. Thus, if now 10 ... Nxh5, then 11 Rxh5 gxh5 12 Qg5, and mate is already unavoidable. Likewise after 10 ... gxh5 11 Qg5 Ne8 12 Qxh5 f6 13 Bxg7 or 13 Be3, White's attack must be crowned with decisive success.

10 ... Be6 11 e5

Also not bad was 11 Bxg7 Kxg7 12 hxg6 fxg6 13 Qh6+ with e5 to follow.

11 ... Ne8 12 Bxg7 Nxg7 13 hxg6 hxg6

Black had more promise of defensive resources with 13 ... h5.

14 Qh6 f6

On 14 ... Nh5 would clearly follow 15 g4, but now White recovers the sacrificed pawn whilst maintaining the attack.

15 Qh7+ Kf7 16 Rh6 Rg8

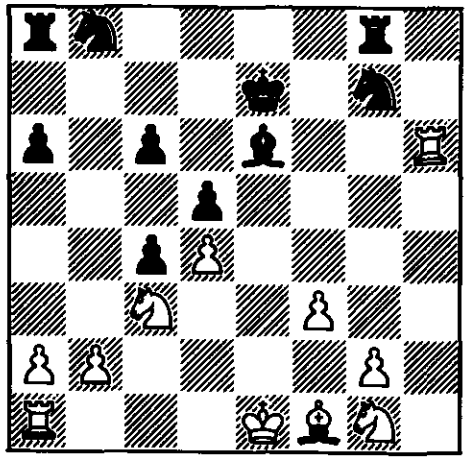
16 ... Bf5 is no good in view of 17 g4, but after the text move Black loses not one but two pawns. However, there was no choice. Admittedly, by playing 16 ... Qe8,

he could retain material equilibrium, but he falls under an irresistible attack: 17 Be2! (threat: 18 Qxg6+ Kg8 19 Qh7+ Kf7 20 f4 and wins) 17 ... g5 (or 17 ... Bf5 18 e6+! Kxe6 19 g4! Bd3 20 Qxg7 Rf7 21 Rh8; it is interesting that in this variation it is not possible to take the knight at once by 19 Qxg7, in view of 19 ... Rg8 20 Qh7 g5) 18 f4 g4 19 Bxg4 Bxg4 20 Qg6+ Kg8 21 Qxg4 f5 22 Qh4 and the threat e6 is decisive, since on ... e6 follows mate in two moves.

17 exf6 exf6 18 Qxg6+ Kf8 19 Qxf6+

A sensible decision. Playing for the attack at all costs was risky. On 19 0-0-0, Black would obtain counterattacking chances by 19 ... Nd7 with the threat of ... Bf5 or ... Nf5.

19 ... Qxf6 20 Rxf6+ Ke7 21 Rh6



White has won a pawn: besides this, a phalanx consisting of two connected passed pawns has been created for him on the king's flank. In the endgame, such a superiority is realised quite easily, but this is still a long way off. There is a rather sharp middlegame in prospect, in which neither king can feel secure. This gives Black definite counter-chances, he needs only to complicate the game and avoid exchanges which draw the game closer to an ending.

However, why was it that White's strong attack, into which went so much ingenuity, bore such modest fruit? This happened because White, relying on his pawn centre, hurled himself too impetuously into an attack on the flank, leaving his king in the centre. This was reckless and premature. That is why White's 9th move should be censured.

If after **21 ... Nf5 22 Rh7+ Kd6 23 Nge2 Nd7** (Black mobilises his reserves, exploiting the fact that White cannot castle in view of 24 ... Ne3 winning the g2 pawn) **24 Kf2** Black had not made the mistake **24 ... c5?** then he not only could have defended himself successfully, but also had available interesting possibilities of counterattack.

He should play 24 ... Nf6 25 Rh1 Raf8! forestalling the unpleasant move g4 and securing the position of the knight on f5, which exerts strong pressure on the centre and the king's flank. On 26 g4? (after 25 ... Raf8) follows 26 ... Nxg4+! 27 fxg4 Nxd4+, and White has to give up the rook a1, since not possible is either 28 Kg3 Rxg4+ 29 Kh2 Nf3+ mating, or

28 Kg1 Rxg4+ 29 Bg2 Nf3+ 30 Kf1 Nh4+. If, instead of 26 g4, White continues with the more modest 26 g3 (you see, it is necessary to bring the bishop into play!), then Black obtains a threatening attack by 26 ... Ne4+ (27 fxe4 Nxg3+ 28 Kg2 Nxh1+ 29 Kxh1 Rg7! and wins).

After the "active" **24 ... c5** came a quick catastrophe, and there is no need to explain in detail the finale of the game:

25 dxc5+ Nxc5 26 Nf4

White rids himself of the weak d4 pawn and introduces all the inactive pieces into battle; all this - is a result of Black's light-headed "attack" on the centre.

26 ... Rab8 27 Rb1 d4 28 Nxe6! dxc3 29 Nxc5 Rxb2+

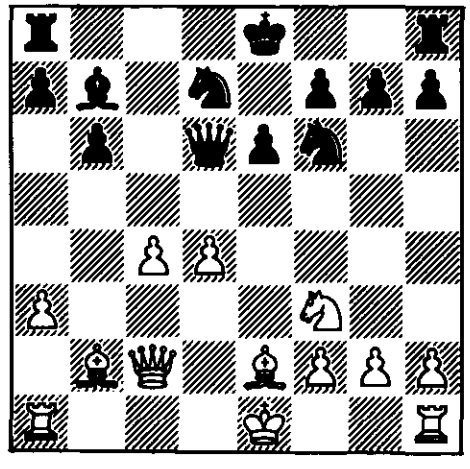
The piece, but not the game, can be saved by the move 29 ... Kxc5, on which would follow 30 Rc7+ Kd6 31 Rxc4 Rxb2+ 32 Rxb2 cxb2 33 Rb4 with an easy win in the endgame.

30 Rxb2 cxb2 31 Ne4+ Ke5 32 Rb7 c3 33 Nxc3 Rc8 34 Na4 Rc2+ 35 Be2 b1Q 36 Rxb1 Rxa2 37 Nc3 Rc2 38 Rb3 a5 39 Ra3 a4 40 Nxa4 Nd4 41 Re3+

The time control passed, White will not "miss" anything; therefore **1:0**

We refer to the pawn phalanx. This name is given to some (most frequently two) connected pawns, out of which at least one is situated on an open file. The phalanx - this is clearly dynamic, connected with forward movement. This sort of pawn-pair potentially has dynamic power, capable of breaking through the enemy front. The central phalanx with pawns on the d and c-files is a very active weapon. Often another phalanx is met in practice, made up of the e and f-pawns; we give it detailed consideration in the next chapter. Here, however, we stay with the basic aspect of the phalanx, consisting of the "hanging" pawns, i.e. pawns which are situated on two open files and isolated from the rest of the pawn chain. Usually the "hanging" phalanx comes about on the c and d-files, since its formation for the most part is connected with definite opening systems and variations. We look at a few examples.

In the 3rd game of the match **Levenfish-Botvinnik**, 1937, after: **1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 e6 3 Nc3 Bb4 4 Qc2 d5 5 cxd5 Qxd5 6 e3 c5 7 a3 Bxc3+ 8 bxc3 b6 9 Nf3 Nbd7 10 c4 Qd6 11 Bb2 Bb7 12 Be2 cxd4 13 exd4** the following position was reached:



White has obtained "hanging" pawns on the d4 and c4 squares. This pawn-group is isolated from the rest of the White pawns; at the same time it is situated on open files and therefore, if it is slowed down, will become an object of attack for the opponent's heavy pieces. Both these factors characterise the weak side of a "hanging centre". But it also has a great quality - mobility. The "hanging centre" is above all a phalanx - and if it gets a chance to display its dynamic virtue and advances, then it might sweep away everything in its path.

Let us look at the further development of the struggle:

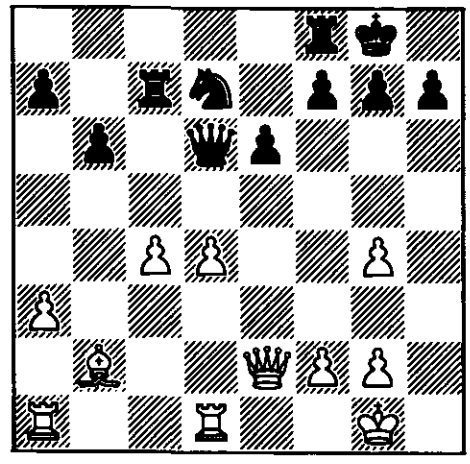
13 ... 0-0 14 0-0 Ng4 15 h3 Bxf3 16 hxg4 Bxe2 17 Qxe2 Rac8

The c4 pawn is the vulnerable point in White's "hanging centre", and it is here that Black directs his blows.

18 Rfd1

White prepares a bold advance of the central pawns, in reply to which Black continues to concentrate pressure on the c-file. If he wants to, Black could prevent the opponent's plan by 18 ... Re8, and if 19 Qf1, then 19 ... Qf4, but, not without foundation, he considers that the advance d5 is a double-edged weapon. The pawn has nowhere to go, further than the d5 square, while then Black takes control of the c5 square and pins down the c4 pawn. And the pawn, deprived of mobility and backward, is a serious positional weakness.

18 ... Rc7



19 d5 e5 20 Re1 f6 21 a4 h6

Black prevents ... g5. If 21 ... Re8, then 22 Ba3 Nc5, and White can play with advantage 23 g5.

22 a5 bxa5 23 Ba3 Nc5 24 Reb1 a6 25 Qe1 Rfc8 26 Qxa5 Qd7 27 Rb6

With the aim of effecting a further advance of the d-pawn, which would follow at once after 27 ... Qxg4.

27 ... Nd3?

Leading to defeat. After 27 ... Ne4, as shown by numerous analyses of the present position, Black should not lose.

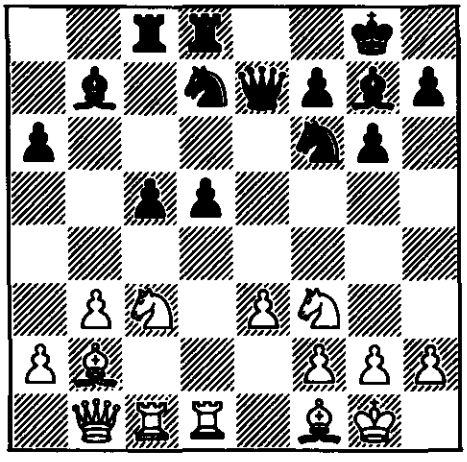
28 d6

Because of the threat Qd5+ Black loses the exchange.

28 ... Nf4 29 dxc7 and **White won**

Also in the next example (**Sokolsky-Botvinnik**, Semi-final 11th USSR Championship 1938), White does not succeed in making the opponent's "hanging" centre

an object of attack; on the contrary, its dynamic power tells quite quickly.



17 Ne2 Bh6

With the threat of ... d4.

18 Ba3 Ng4

While now ... Nxe3 is threatened.

19 Qd3 Nde5 20 Nxe5 Qxe5 21 Ng3 Qf6 22 Nh1 d4 23 Qe2 Ne5 24 exd4 cxd4 25 Rxc8 Bxc8

This is better than 25 ... Rxc8. The rook needs to stay on the d-file in order to support the advance of the passed pawn. At the same time, ... Bg4 is threatened.

26 Re1 d3

The "hanging" pawn breaks through.

27 Qd1 Bg4 28 Qa1 d2 29 Rxe5 d1Q

29 ... Qxe5 was also possible.

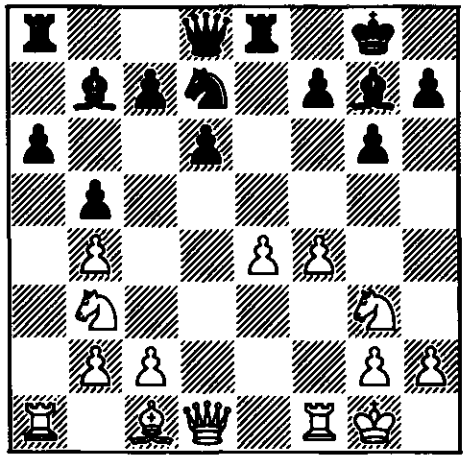
30 Re8+ Rxe8 31 Qxf6 Be2 32 Ng3 Bg7 33 Qc6 Bb5

and **Black** soon **won.**

The march of the d-pawn - one of the main components of the "hanging" pawn centre - proved decisive.

We have already spoken about the role of the pawn centre, which in individual positions might prove to be not a strength but a weakness, not a weapon, but an object of attack.

The weakness of a central pawn is a serious positional minus, particularly when it is subjected to an attack on the open files and ranks. We will look at a few examples which allow us to understand how positional processes attend the weakening of the central pawns.



Here we have a position from the 19th game of the **Tarrasch-Chigorin** match of 1893. The White pawn on e4 is under attack. Black intends this planned objective, arising from the following considerations: the e4 pawn lacks pawn cover, it is also difficult to defend it with pieces, since White's king's bishop has been exchanged, while it is not so easy to mobilise his queen's rook; finally the central pawns are convenient targets for attack on the open lines - the e-file and the a8-h1 diagonal, which are in Black's hands. At one

point, as far back as the opening itself, White played f4, without looking ahead to the future consequences of this advance.

Further events developed in the following way.

17 Re1 Nf6 18 Nd2

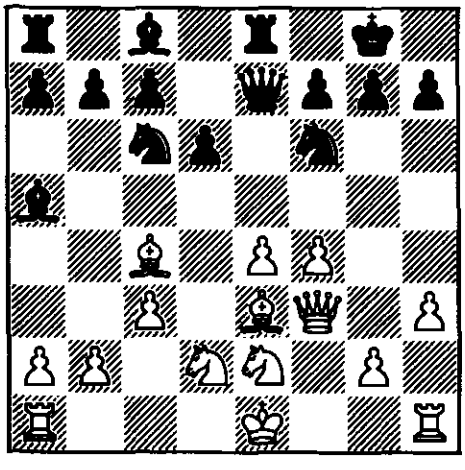
White already has to make this awkward move, locking in his own bishop, in order to defend the ill-fated pawn. On 18 Qd3 follows 18 ... Qe7 19 Nbd2 d5! 20 e5 Qxb4. 18 Qf3 is also bad: then, besides 18 ... Qe7, possible is an immediate 18 ... Nxe4 19 Nxe4 d5 or 19 Rxe4 Rxe4 20 Nxe4 Qe7 21 Nbd2 Re8 22 Nf6+ Bxf6 23 Qxb7 Qe3+.

18 ... Qd7 19 h3 Re7 20 Re2 Rae8 21 Qf1

21 Qe1 does not save the pawn in view of 21 ... Qc6 22 c3 Nxe4 23 Nxe4 f5.

21 ... h5 22 h4 Qg4 23 Qf2 Qxh4 and **White lost.**

A similar scheme of attack on the central White pawns was carried out virtually in the opening in a game **Ravinsky-Romanovsky** (Leningrad 1926):



Also here the source of the weakness of the e4 pawn, deprived of pawn cover, is the advance f4, made even on the 4th move after 1 e4 Nc6 2 d4 e5 3 dxe5 Nxe5 4 f4.

In the diagrammed position White has further trouble in that the rooks cannot be included in the defence of the e4 pawn. Admittedly he has the white-squared bishop available for this, which Tarrasch did not have, while Black's queen's bishop does not reinforce the attack on the centre from the b7 square; nevertheless this bishop finds another way to join in the attack on the e4 pawn.

And so, Black already threatens to take the e4 pawn. Therefore:

12 Bd3 Bf5!

This is the possibility we referred to. Black attacks the e4 pawn for a fourth time. The continuation 13 exf5 Qxe3 14 0-0-0 Qxf3 15 Nxf3 Nd5 was not comforting for White, since it would dangerously weaken the e3 point, but nevertheless he should give it preference since the attempt to defend the pawn is demolished.

13 Ng3 Bxe4! 14 Ngxe4 Nxe4 15 Bxe4 d5

White has avoided material loss, but the attack on his central pawn allows the opponent to develop a very strong attack on the king, which has not managed to castle.

16 Bxd5 Qxe3+ 17 Qxe3 Rxe3+ 18 Kd1 Rd8 19 Bxc6 Red3!

The Black rooks break through

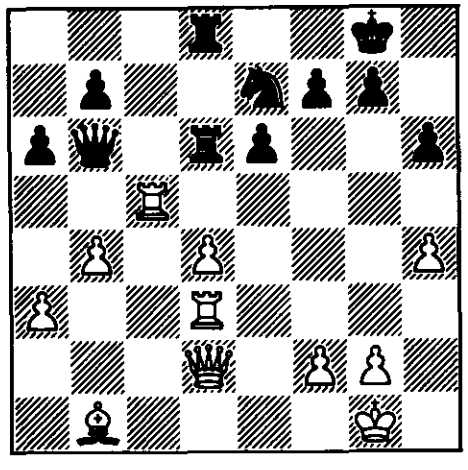
to the second rank, after which White cannot resist for very long.

One is drawn to the conclusion that a serious reason for a weakness of a central (or indeed any other) pawn is the impossibility of defending it with pawns from adjacent files. It goes without saying, the question here is not about real weaknesses such as are created by the opponent with threats of attack on the pawn.

This is why the isolation of the central pawns, if they turn out to be on open files, can prove to be a dangerous weakness in a position.

The theme "isolated pawn" was treated in the positional teachings of Steinitz and was frequently encountered in tournament practice of the last decade of the 19th century - the period of the formation of these teachings and their baptism in battle.

The struggle around the isolated pawn developed in an interesting way in the game **Showalter-Blackburne** (Nürnberg 1896):

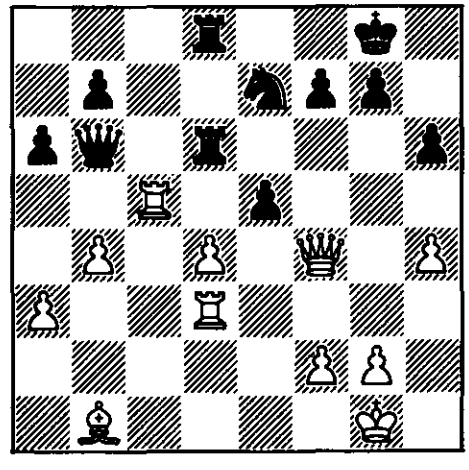


The isolated pawn on d4 is a source of serious worry for White. Black has prospects of further increasing the attack by ... Nf5. The need to defend the pawn limits the activity of the White pieces. Therefore he rightly sees his chances in an attack on the opponent's king's flank, weakened by the removal of all pieces from it and the move ... h6. However, 31 Rg3, which suggests itself, does not work as it is possible to simply take the pawn: 31 ... Rxd4, and if 32 Qxh6, then 32 ... Ng6. In view of this Showalter stopped at another continuation.

31 Qf4!

White intends to play 32 Rf3, and if 32 ... f6, then now 33 Rg3. Besides this, the reply 31 ... Nf5 is parried, on which would follow 32 d5!. Showalter's move is well thought out but it turns out that he did not calculate the future variations to the end.

31 ... e5



This amusing but not dangerous attempt to cut the "Gordian Knot" apparently took Showalter unawares.

32 Qxe5?

But this is already an unfortunate mistake. White keeps the pawn, but loses a piece, whereas 32 Qe4 would allow him to achieve a draw. For example, 32 ... exd4 (is there any better?) 33 Qxe7 Re6 34 Qc7 Re1+ 35 Kh2 Qxc7+ 36 Rxc7 Rxb1 37 Rxb7 a5 38 Rf3! f6 39 Rg3 g5 40 hxg5 hxg5 41 Rh3 d3 42 Rhh7 - draw.

32 ... Re6 33 Qc7 Re1+ 34 Kh2 Qxc7+ 35 Rxc7 Nd5 and **Black won.**

In conclusion we look at several games in full, which help us to understand more deeply the methods of planning, when a weakness in the centre serves as a special purpose object of the plan.

Queen's Pawn Opening
White: **K.Bardeleben**
Black: **M.Chigorin**
(Hastings 1895)

1 d4 d5 2 Nf3 Bg4 3 e3 e6 4 Be2 Nd7 5 b3

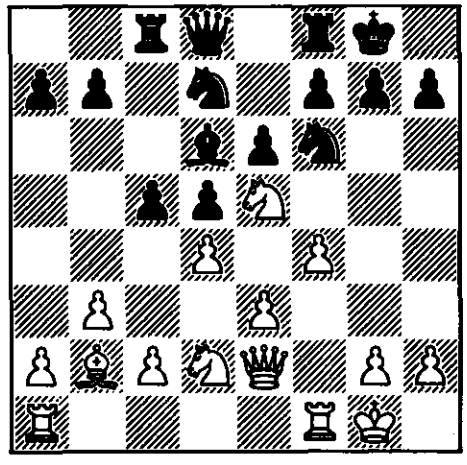
The opening proceeds calmly. Both opponents are busy with the mobilisation of forces, concentrating their influence on the centre. Such "quiet" conditions are always created when there is a lack of pawn tension in the centre. In the Queen's Pawn Opening this tension is usually conditioned by the moves c4 and ... c5.

5 ... Ngf6 6 Bb2 Bd6 7 Nbd2 c6 8 Ne5

Occupying the e5 square is more effective when the queen's bishop is placed on c8. In the present position it is hard to link this raid to any sort of concrete plan. Besides this, the position of the knight on e5 is only superficially firm. As Black has counterplay with the move ... c5, the move Ne5 turns out to be a blank shot.

It would be useful to complete his development (8 0-0) and strive for tension-play in the centre by c4. In this case, White could count on approximate equality. In view of his unassuming play in the opening, he cannot reckon on more.

8 ... Bxe2 9 Qxe2 0-0 10 f4 Rc8 11 0-0 c5



12 Rac1

White must already defend himself - the win of a pawn is threatened after ... cxd4.

12 ... cxd4 13 exd4 Qa5! 14 Nd3

Indirectly defending the a2 pawn, but the right reply was 14 a4, and if 14 ... Bb4, then 15 Nb1. White's plan should be to neutralise the pressure on the c-file by c3, and then attempt to carry out

active operations on the king's flank.

14 ... Ba3!

By exchanging bishops, Black weakens the c3 square and the d4 pawn. Now he seizes the initiative.

15 Bxa3 Qxa3

Black cannot take the pawn on a2 but, by combining pressure on the c-file with an attack on the d4 pawn by the manoeuvre ... Qd6-b6, he threatens to consolidate his positional advantage.

16 c4

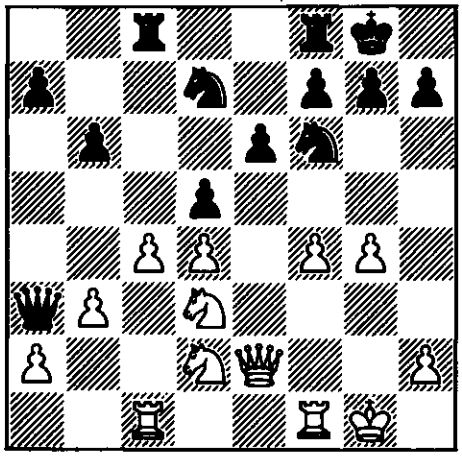
Forced: after ... Qd6 this move will already be impossible and the c-pawn turns out to be a real weakness.

16 ... b6

On 16 ... Qd6 follows of course 17 c5. Now Black threatens this move.

17 g4

The only possibility of defence was the move 17 b4, pointed out by Pillsbury. But after 17 ... dxc4 18 Nxc4 Qa6 19 Nd6 Rxc1 20 Rxc1 b5 21 Ne4 Nxe4 22 Qxe4 Qxa2 23 Qc6 Nb6 24 Qxb5 Nd5 Black maintains the initiative.



White now ignores the hidden threat, and the weak d4 pawn soon proves to be indefensible.

17 ... Qd6

Now the threat ... dxc4, with ... Qxd4+ to follow, is irresistible.

18 Ne5 dxc4 19 Rxc4 b5! 20 Rxc8 Qxd4+ 21 Kh1 Rxc8

The first stage of the plan was the creation of weaknesses in White's position, in particular the weak pawn on d4, the second - the victorious attack on this pawn. Now approaches the third stage - realisation of the advantage.

22 Ndf3 Qxf4 23 Nxd7 Nxd7 24 Qxb5 Nf6 25 Ng5 Qc7 26 Nxf7

A mistaken sacrifice, but in a hopeless position.

26 ... Qxf7 27 Qe5

27 g5 does not win back the piece in view of ... Qd7.

27 ... Qd7 28 Re1 Qd5+ 29 Qxd5 exd5 30 Re7 Rc1+ 0:1

Queen's Gambit

White: **F.Dus Chotimirsky**
Black: **P.Romanovsky**
(4th USSR Championship 1925)

1 d4 d5 2 Nf3 Nf6 3 c4 e6 4 Nc3 c5 5 cxd5 exd5 6 g3 Nc6 7 Bg2 Be7

As a result of a little transposition of moves, a position from one of the main variations of the Tarrasch Defence has arisen. White stops at a plan, the author of which was the famous Russian grandmaster Rubinstein and which is based on a persistent attack on the

d5 pawn.

It should be mentioned that Rubinstein's plan brought quite a lot of distress to advocates of Tarrasch's idea.

8 0-0 0-0 9 dxc5

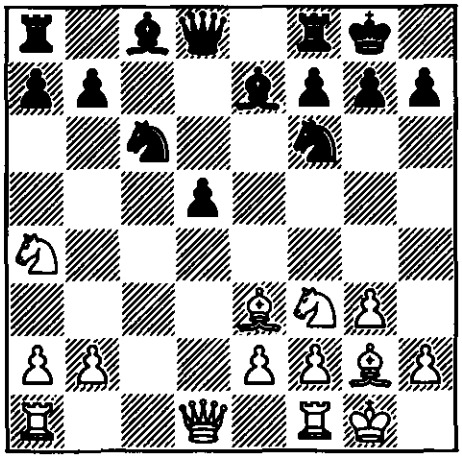
This exchange, in connection with the two following moves, is the starting point of a plan which White successfully employed in the game Reti-Tarrasch, in the Pistyan International tournament 1922.

9 ... Bxc5 10 Na4 Be7

Only here, otherwise 11 Bg5.

11 Be3

White will occupy the important d4 point, in connection with which the isolated pawn on d5, pinned down, could become the object of a dangerous attack, as has occurred in many games played with the present variation.



11 ... Bf5

Here also 11 ... b6 (thus played Tarrasch in the above mentioned game with Reti), 11 ... Ng4 and 11 ... Ne4, have been tried, but all these continuations do not solve the difficult problems arising for Black because of the d5 pawn.

With the move in the game Black intends to effect an exchange of the white-squared bishops after Be4, mistakenly supposing that this strengthens the d5 pawn. Admittedly, one of the White pieces attacking the pawn vanishes from the board, but, as you see, at the same time the Black piece defending it also vanishes. However, it is not the weakness of the d5 pawn, but the control of the strategical square d4, which has decisive significance. The struggle for this square is also Black's main task.

The relatively best reply was 11 ... Ne4.

12 Rc1 Be4 13 Nd4

The simplest and most consistent. The blockade of the d5 pawn is guaranteed.

13 ... Nxd4

On 13 ... Ne5 would have followed 14 f3 Bg6 15 Bf4 Nc4 16 b3 Nd6 17 Bh3 Nh5 18 Be3, and Black's position remains difficult. Likewise also 13 ... Bxg2 14 Nxc6 bxc6 15 Kxg2 Qd7 16 Bc5 was clearly to White's advantage.

14 Qxd4 Bxg2 15 Kxg2 b6

Necessary, in order to free the rook from defence of the a7 pawn.

16 Rfd1 Qd7 17 Nc3 Bc5 18 Qf4 Bxe3 19 Qxe3 Rfe8 20 Qf4 Re6 21 Rd4!

The d5 pawn is doomed. The whole White army is now hurled into an attack on the isolated outpost.

21 ... Rae8 22 Rcd1 Re5

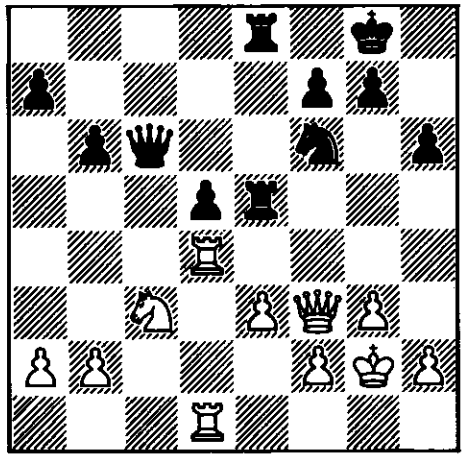
On 22 ... Rd6 follows 23 e4.

23 Qf3

White could win the d5 pawn at once by 23 e4, easily deciding the game. If, on this, 23 ... Rh5, then 24 h4.

23 ... h6 24 e3 Qc6

Black is powerless to defend the pawn. For example, 24 ... Rh5 25 h4 Ree5 26 e4! dxe4 (26 ... Nxe4 27 Rxe4! dxe4 28 Qxh5!) 27 Nxe4 Qc6 28 Nxf6+ Qxf6 29 Qxf6 gxf6 30 Rg4+ Kf8 (or 30 ... Kh7 31 Rd8 Rhf5 32 Rgg8 and wins) 31 Rd8+ Ke7 32 Rgg8 f5 33 Rge8+ Kf6 34 Rxe5 Kxe5 35 f4 remaining to all intents and purposes with an extra rook.



25 Nxd5 Ne4

In the search for chance possibilities. Of course, by playing 25 ... Nxd5 26 Rxd5 Rxd5 27 Rxd5, it was possible to drag on resistance, but with highly problematical hopes of success.

26 Nc3 f5

The continuation 26 ... Rf5 27 Qxf5 Nxc3+ 28 Qf3 Qxf3+ 29 Kxf3 Nxd1 30 Rxd1 Rc8 31 Rd2 likewise should not save Black, even though it did not provide White with such a quick celebration of victory.

27 Rd7 R5e7 28 Rxe7 Rxe7 29 Rd8+ Re8 30 Nd5!

With several threats; White at least wins one more pawn.

30 ... Kf7

Or 30 ... Kh8 31 Ne7 Qb5 32 Qxf5 Qxf5 33 Rxe8+ with an extra rook.

31 Qxf5+ Nf6 32 Rxe8 Kxe8 33 Qe5+ Kf8 34 e4 Nd7 35 Qe7+ Kg8 36 h4 Nc5 37 Qxa7 1:0

A valuable game, reflecting clearly three stages of a single plan. The first stage (9th-12th moves) - organising objects of attack (the d4 and d5 points). The second stage (from the 13th to 25th moves) - carrying out concrete ideas with the aim of winning the d5 pawn. The third stage - realisation of material and positional advantages. Black's manoeuvre ... Bf5-e4 turned out to be mistaken.

Four Knights Game

White: **O.Duras**

Black: **A.Rubinstein**

(Carlsbad 1907)

Before going over to a discussion of this game, we want to say a few words about its epos, if we may express it so, and the author itself of this epos, a classic strategical plan of Rubinstein.

There is a quiet opening, where the first skirmish in the centre is a

long time coming, and does not bring an advantage to either side. White begins the offensive first with the move f4, which had been tried time and again in practice and, up to this game, given good results for White. Even in the opening stage, Rubinstein thought out a plan of attack on the e4 square and foresaw that it would be weakened by the move f4. The attack launched by White looked dangerous, but required energetic and purposeful execution. Duras was not able to permeate his play with concrete ideas, to map out a clear outline of the objective and a real way of achieving it. Separate passive moves began to interrupt the planned line of his thoughts, the attack came to assume a shapeless character, whereas Rubinstein continued to purposefully force pressure on the e4 pawn. Soon this pressure was converted to an energetic attack by nearly all the Black pieces. The central stronghold of White's position - the e4 pawn - fell, and this led to a disintegration of his king's flank.

This game, played by Rubinstein at the outset of his creative growth, is a forerunner of all his future versatile work in the area of the opening, ending and principally in the planning struggle of the central stage.

Rubinstein's mastery charms by its clear form, strictness, rationality. For him, everything was well-measured, stone by stone. He was a master builder of the chess struggle, and precisely for this reason his plans give an impression of solidity and serve as handy material for study. Rubinstein did not like to yield to the area of intuition. He did not confide in many people even his own experiences and again and again was ready to look diligently at each pebble of his building as if he were running across it for the first time.

The diligence with which Rubinstein conducted his games, made each plan and successfully carried it out, demonstrated the excellent creative production of a clear intellect and convincing logic. Rubinstein was not a psychologist, not a philosopher, not a daring artist, but a profound connoisseur of true strokes, accurate lines and the clear harmony of thoughts. All these traits of his creativity show through in the present game.

1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Nc3 Nf6 4 Bb5 Bb4 5 0-0 0-0 6 d3 Bxc3

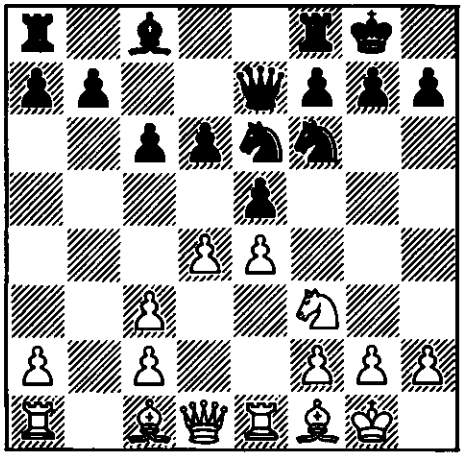
Black exchanges the knight with the aim of preventing the move Ne2, which is useful for an attack on the king's flank.

7 bxc3 d6 8 Bg5

An annoying pin, forcing Black to take measures to free himself from it and then already to set about drawing up a plan of play. Meanwhile White prepares his forces for an attack on the king's flank, intending, after appropriate

development, to initiate an offensive with the move f4.

8 ... Qe7 9 Re1 Nd8 10 d4 Ne6 11 Bc1 c6 12 Bf1



Nowadays this is a theoretical position, repeatedly met in practice and subjected to thorough analysis. In the majority opinion, Black's good development and firm position in the centre allows one to talk of equilibrium. However, when the present game was played, the opening idea employed by Duras was relatively new and inspired fear in Black: in 9 cases out of 10 White's attack brought him success. Rubinstein was the first to bring to light reliable methods of defence in this position and likewise a deeply founded motive for a counter-initiative and counter-attack.

12 ... Qc7

Four years later, in a game with Spielmann played in the second Carlsbad tournament, Rubinstein continued 12 ... Rd8. Then came 13 g3 Qc7 14 Nh4 d5! 15 f4, and Black could win a pawn by 15 ... Nxe4, without any compensation for the opponent.

In the present game, Rubinstein sticks to another, less energetic but more concealed, plan of attack on the e4 pawn and with this in view he places the king's rook on e8.

13 Nh4 Re8 14 Qd3

A serious loss of time. It seems White feared the counter-attack ... d5 and in the event of 15 exd5 Nxd5 defended the pawn on c3. The fact of the matter, however, is that, after 14 g3 d5 15 exd5 Nxd5 16 Rxe5 Nxc3 17 Qe1 Na4 18 Bf4, White far outstrips the opponent in development.

14 ... Bd7 15 g3 Rad8 16 Bg2 Bc8

This bishop later transfers to b7, where it joins in the attack on the e4 pawn. Thus, move by move, sensibly and persistently, Black deploys his forces for a counter-attack in the centre.

17 f4 exf4 18 gxf4

White has a mobile pawn centre, further reinforced by the f4 pawn. True, his queen's side forces are still not mobilised, his king's position is rather exposed. Nevertheless, the strong central pawn group opens up good prospects for White for the future. He should only base his concrete ideas on a plan, remembering that an extremely sharp situation demands a dynamic approach to the position. You see, all of Black's pieces will be on central squares, therefore it is necessary to carry out the attack quickly and energetically.

18 ... Nf8!

A crafty retreat. Black intends to play ... Ng6 and, by removing White's knight, increase still further the pressure on the centre.

19 f5

He would like to play 19 e5, but after 19 ... Ng6 20 Nxg6 hxg6 21 Ba3 Bf5 22 Bxd6 Qxd6 23 exd6 Bxd3 24 cxd3 Rxd6 and Black has the better endgame.

With the move in the game, White prevents the entry of the knight on g6 and threatens to play Bg5. The reply is forced.

19 ... h6 20 Bd2?

Beginning play without a plan - and this in a tense position, where each move must be with an objective. White should combine the threat of a break in the centre (e5) with an attack on the g-file (Kh1, Rg1 etc). In the first instance, 20 Bf4 with the threat e5 serves for the carrying out of this plan. After the probable 20 ... Nh5 21 Bg3 Nh7 there is a tense struggle in prospect with chances for both sides.

20 ... N8h7 21 Nf3

White again begins to solve a particular problem - to prevent the knight going to g5. A little more and his whole game will go downhill.

He should play 21 Qg3 Qe7 22 Bf3 (but not 22 Bxh6? Nh5 23 Qg4 N7f6 24 Qg5 Kh7, and White suffers material loss) and the decisive battle is still ahead.

21 ... Re7 22 h4?

Even now, after 22 e5 dxe5 23 Rxe5 Rxe5 24 Nxe5, despite the pawn weaknesses, White would have a satisfactory position thanks to the active deployment of his pieces.

22 ... c5!

Little by little beginning preparations for a counter-attack, which leads to a decisive result sooner than could be imagined.

... c4 is threatened, winning a pawn. If 23 dxc5, then 23 ... dxc5 24 Qc4 Ng4 with increasing threats.

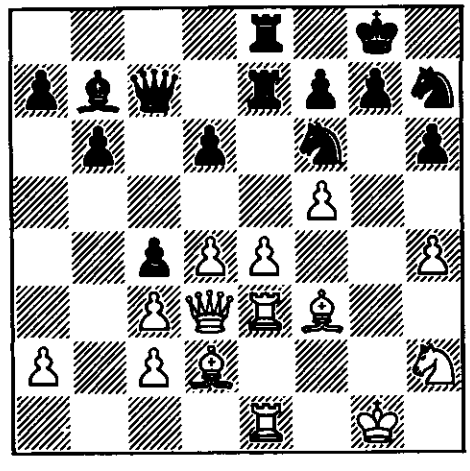
23 Nh2 Rde8 24 Re3

The only reply, but it merely postpones the downfall of the central pawns.

24 ... b6 25 Bf3 Bb7 26 Rae1

The loss of a pawn could be delayed by the move 26 d5, but the surrender of the e5 square would be an even greater loss, while the pawn all the same would prove to be doomed to destruction. On 26 d5 might follow 26 ... Nd7 27 Bg2 Ne5 28 Qf1 Nf6 29 Kh1 Qc8 and then ... Ba6 with the gain of territory.

26 ... c4



27 Qe2 Bxe4

The inevitable has happened! The main point of the defence has fallen, after a few moves all is lost.

28 Qg2 d5 29 Bc1 Bxf3 30 Nxf3 Rxe3 31 Bxe3 Re4 32 Qh3 Rg4+ 33 Kh1 Rg3 34 Qh2 Ng4 35 Bg1

Or 35 Qe2 Rxf3.

35 ... Nxh2 36 Bxh2 Qf4 37 Ng1 Qxh4 0:1

Nimzo-Indian Defence
White: **M.Botvinnik**
Black: **E.Zagorovsky**
(Sverdlovsk 1943)

1 Nf3 d5 2 c4 e6 3 b3 Nf6 4 Bb2 Be7 5 e3 0-0 6 Nc3 c5

After this display of activity White gets the chance to begin play on the isolated d5 pawn, and on the basis of this achievement, sets about the construction of a great plan. Nevertheless it is hard to blame him for striving for lively play and opening the position in the centre, the more so that other less active continuations have their shady sides. Both 6 ... b6 7 Ne5 Bb7 8 Be2 Nbd7 9 f4 and 6 ... Nbd7 7 Be2 b6 8 cxd5 exd5 9 Nd4 would secure White the better prospects.

7 cxd5 Nxd5 8 Nxd5 exd5

The capture 8 ... Qxd5 would allow White to develop his bishop with tempo, since on 9 Bc4 he would have to retreat the queen to d8; 9 ... Qh5 is worse in view of 10 g4!.

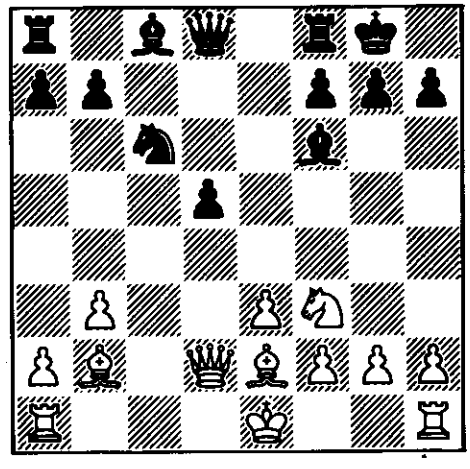
9 d4

White's plan is clear. The first stage of it is the creation of an isolated pawn on d5.

9 ... cxd4

If 9 ... Qa5+, then 10 Qd2 Qxd2+ 11 Kxd2. On 9 ... Bf6 good is 10 Qd2 b6 11 Be2. Sooner or later, after dxc5, Black gets "hanging" pawns, which in the present situation turns out to be a weakness in his position. Therefore Black himself exchanges on d4, conceding the "isolated" pawn on d5; at least it is unfavourable for White to take on d4 now either with the knight, in view of ... Bb4+, or with the bishop because of ... Nc6.

10 Qxd4 Bf6 11 Qd2 Nc6 12 Be2



12 ... Be6

The beginning of an incorrect plan. Black limits his activity to defence of the d5 pawn, whereas it was necessary for him at all costs to prevent White's capturing the d4 square. It is even worth giving up a pawn for this by ... d4. There was, however, a better possibility: 12 ...

Bxb2 13 Qxb2 Qa5+ 14 Qd2 Qxd2+ 15 Kxd2 d4 16 exd4 Rd8 17 Kc3 Bg4 18 Rhd1 Rac8 and Black ought not lose.

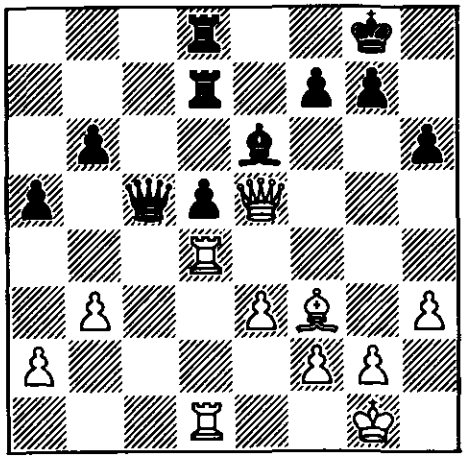
13 0-0 Bxb2 14 Qxb2 Qa5 15 Rfd1 Rfd8 16 Rd2 Rd7 17 Rad1 Rad8 18 h3 h6 19 Ne5 Nxe5 20 Qxe5 Qc5 21 Bf3

The second part of White's plan consisted of riveting the whole of Black's forces to the weak central pawn. This objective has been achieved and the denouement draws closer.

21 ... b6 22 Qb2 Rc8 23 Qe5 Rcd8

He should simply give up the pawn by playing 23 ... Qc7 or 23 ... Qc3.

24 Rd4 a5



25 g4

The concluding phase of the plan. Exploiting the fact that Black's pieces have been diverted to defence of the centre, White launches an attack on the king's flank.

25 ... Qc6 26 g5 hxg5 27 Qxg5 f6 28 Qg6 Bf7 29 Qg3

Kh1 followed by Rg1 is threatened, after which the attack on the h and g-files proves to be irresistible.

29 ... f5

With the aim of establishing a link for the queen to the king's flank, but now new weak squares on e5 and g5 are created.

30 Qg5 Qe6 31 Kh1 Qe5 32 Rg1 Rf8

Black's position is miserable, but this move, locking in the king, facilitates White's final attack.

33 Qh6! Rb8 34 Rh4 Kf8 35 Qh8+ Bg8 36 Rf4 Rbb7 37 Rg5 Rf7 38 Qh5 Qa1+ 39 Kh2 g6 40 Qxg6 Bh7 41 Qd6+ Rbe7 42 Qd8+ 1:0

The weak d5 pawn, the culprit for all Black's trouble in this game, remained intact, but the king perished.

Queen's Gambit
White: **H.Kmoch**
Black: **A.Alekhine**
(Kecskemet 1927)

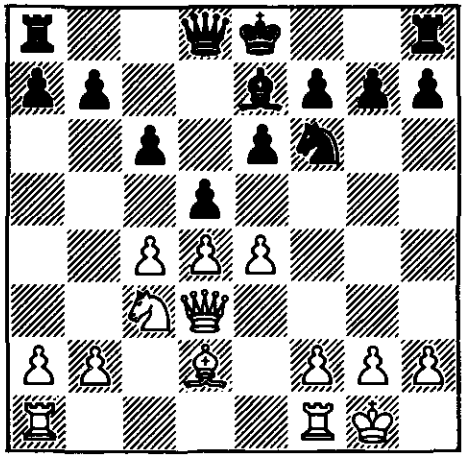
1 d4 d5 2 Nf3 c6 3 e3 Bf5 4 Bd3 e6 5 0-0 Nd7 6 c4 Ngf6 7 Qc2?

White conducts the opening rather planlessly, but, by playing 7 Nc3 now, he could count on equality. Instead of this, White, at the cost of the loss of a tempo, provokes Black into a ... favourable exchange for himself - favourable because even from the first opening moves he was thinking of an operation to seize the white squares.

7 ... Bxd3 8 Qxd3 Ne4

An interesting and original plan, particularly if it is taken into account that the knight cannot be maintained on e4. Black wants to exchange both knights and provoke the opponent into the advance e4, weakening the central pawns. White does not discover the opponent's plan and willingly goes halfway to meeting this idea...

9 Nfd2 Ndf6 10 Nc3 Nxd2 11 Bxd2 Be7 12 e4



Black also reckoned on this. Now he obtains an object for pressure - the d4 pawn.

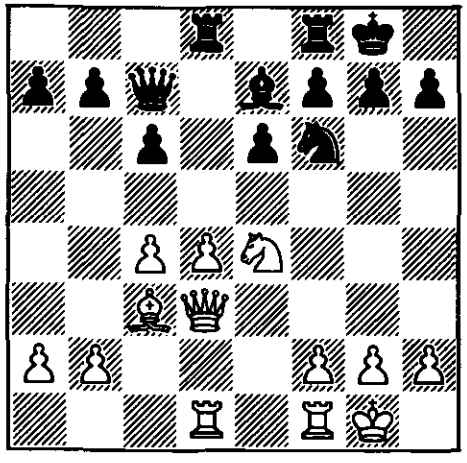
12 ... dxe4 13 Nxe4 0-0 14 Bc3

Not a bad position for the bishop, but if White's game were permeated with a concrete plan, he would without difficulty have found a better scheme of deploying his pieces.

Taking into account the potential weakness of the d4 pawn, White ought to imagine the way Black will go about organising pressure on this point. He will obviously play the queen to c7, and then place one of the rooks on the open file. In order to prevent this, it was necessary to place the bishop not on c3, but on f4, and then play Rad1 and Be5. A tense struggle arises with chances for both sides.

In place of this, after a few moves White falls into the worse position. Neglect of a concrete idea, this most important element of planning, frequently leads to such results.

14 ... Qc7 15 Rad1 Rad8



Black carries out his contemplated set-up. Now the variation 16 d5 cxd5 17 Nxf6+ gxf6 is favourable for him, but not 17 ... Bxf6 18 Bxf6 gxf6 19 Qf3 Qxc4 20 Qxf6 Qe4 21 Rfe1 Qg6 22 Qd4 Qg7 23 Re5, and White's attack compensates for the pawn.

16 Rd2?

White ignores the opponent's threats. He should not allow the invasion of the queen. A quite sufficient defence, securing the position of the d4 pawn, was indicated by Alekhine: 16 f4. Now it is hard for Black to prevent the move f5, eliminating the blockading e6 pawn, while after this the

advance d5 becomes only a question of time. For example, 16 f4 Rfe8 17 f5 and 17 ... e5 is not possible in view of 18 Nxf6+ Bxf6 19 Qg3 (19 ... Qb6 20 c5 followed by dxe5).

16 ... Qf4 17 Nxf6+

On 17 Re1, there would have probably followed simply 17 ... Rd7.

17 ... Bxf6 18 Rfd1 Rd7 19 Qg3 Qf5

The advance d5 is prevented, and the d4 pawn has become a continual worry for White.

20 f4

Another weak move, creating new objects of attack for Black. Thus, in due course, arises the threat ... g5, indeed also the f4 pawn itself will require defence. Finally, he should pay attention to the weakening of the e4 square, which is increased even more by the position of the queen on f5.

20 ... Rfd8 21 Qe3

21 ... c5 was threatened.

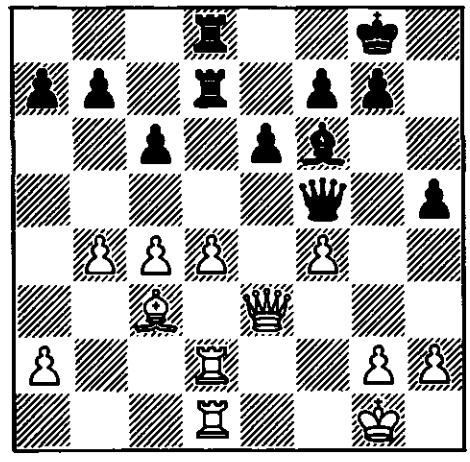
21 ... h5

A typical blockading move. Black is now master of the white squares.

22 b4?

The final positional mistake in a bad position. The pawn was obliged to remain on b2, so as to support the c4 pawn by b3 in case of need. Only in this way could White maintain control over the key central d5 square.

In the present example we get to know another important positional function of the pawns: to gain squares for use as handy piece bases.



22 ... b5!

A standard pawn attack to capture the d5 square.

23 Qf3

If he is to die - then let it be with honour! In the event of 23 c5 White would be suffocated and could not defend his weak points on d4 and f4. It is enough for Black to place his rook on d5, play ... g6, and transfer the bishop to h6, after which one of the threats ... e5 or ... g5 proves to be unstoppable.

23 ... bxc4 24 Qxc6 Qxf4 25 Qxc4 e5

A fifth attack on a fourfold defence.

26 Qe2 exd4 27 Rd3

An attempt to steal away with the bishop to e1. Upon the retreat Ba1 or Bb2 would have followed 27 ... d3!. In addition it seems to White that the d4 pawn is "pinned".

27 ... dxc3! 28 Rxd7 Rxd7 29 Rxd7

Or 29 Qe8+ Kh7 30 Qxd7 Qe4!

31 Qh3 c2 32 Rf1 Qd4+ 33 Kh1 Qd1 and Black also wins.

29 ... Bd4+ 30 Kh1 Qc1+ 0:1

In this game, Kmoch made several tactical errors, the most serious - on the 16th and 22nd moves. However the most cardinal mistake, already of strategical character, was the neglect of the white squares after the exchange of the white-squared bishops, provoked by Kmoch himself in the opening.

Queen's Indian Defence
White: **M.Euwe**
Black: **A.Alekhine**
(23rd game, return match 1937)

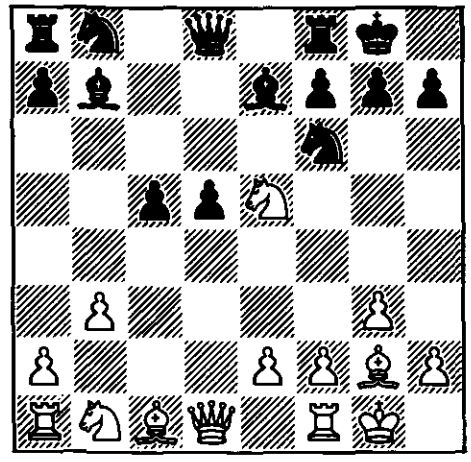
In this very interesting game unfolds a creative argument on the theme of "hanging" pawns.

There is still a great deal of work in prospect for the brains of chess theoreticians and masters in order to bring, as it were, relative clarity into the contradictions of "hanging" pawns. These are both a strength and a weakness, both a mechanism of attack and an object of attack itself, both a formation establishing a gain of space in the centre and a building with shaky foundations.

The present game is one of the most interesting contributions to the investigation of the problems, brought about by the thoughts of two world champions.

"Hanging" pawns were formed here even in the opening stage, after:

1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 e6 3 Nf3 b6 4 g3 Bb7 5 Bg2 Be7 6 0-0 0-0 7 b3 d5 8 Ne5 c5 9 dxc5 bxc5 10 cxd5 exd5



11 Nc3 Nbd7!

Black foresaw this position when, on the 8th move, he began an energetic pawn attack in the centre. Now he completes the mobilisation of his forces and indirectly defends the d5 pawn.

12 Nd3!

An excellent reply, containing the threat to increase pressure on the d5 pawn by Nf4. The continuation 12 ... Ne4 13 Nxe4 dxe4 14 Bb2! does not suit Black now because his pawn position is shattered while White's pieces operate purposefully and harmoniously.

12 ... Nb6

Apparently firmly defending the d5 pawn, but a possibility is opened for White for an attack on the adjacent c5 pawn. A more reliable defence of the "hanging" pawns could have been organised by playing 12 ... Qa5. After 13 Bb2 (13 Bd2 Qa6) 13 ... Rfd8 14 Nf4 Nb6 15 Qe1 (with the threat Nxd5) 15 ... Kf8, White cannot

increase the attack.

13 a4 a5 14 Ba3 Rc8 15 Nb5

Surprisingly, White himself weakens the pressure on the central pawn, which allows the opponent to comfortably regroup his pieces. He should continue 15 Nf4 followed by Qd3; the d5 pawn would give Black a lot of trouble.

15 ... Ne4 16 Qe1 Nd7

Couldn't Black well solve here the problem of the "hanging" pawns? Hardly. On 16 ... c4 would have followed 17 Bxe7 Qxe7 18 Qxa5 cxd3, and the crisis is solved rather in White's favour, for example, 19 Qxb6 dxe2 20 Re1 Nc5 21 Nd4!

17 Rd1 Nd6 18 Nf4

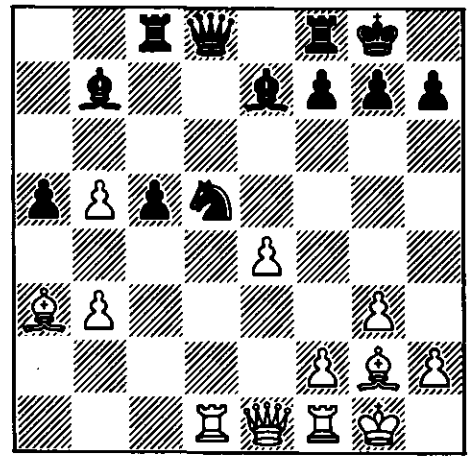
It seems White's efforts are beginning to bear fruit. However, it soon becomes clear that Black also reckoned precisely on this natural reply and had prepared a surprising counter-blow, which refutes the opponent's plan literally on the threshold of achieving its objective.

18 Bh3 offered better chances, with the probable continuation 18 ... Nxb5 19 axb5 c4 (if 19 ... d4, then 20 Rc1 with dangerous pressure on the c5 pawn, while against the play on the long diagonal he has a reliable defensive resource - f3) 20 Bxe7 Qxe7 21 bxc4 dxc4 22 Nf4 Rfd8 23 Qxa5. Having an extra pawn and a good position, White has a right to hope for success.

18 ... Nxb5 19 axb5 Nf6 20 Nxd5

The pawn falls, and White is ready to celebrate the occasion of a successfully completed seige of the "hanging" pawns.

20 ... Nxd5 21 e4



Apparently Euwe reckoned now only on the continuation 21 ... Qb6 22 exd5 Bd6 23 Qe2 Rb8 (threatening to attack the b5 pawn) 24 Rc1 (so as, on 24 ... Bc8, to reply 25 Qc4) 24 ... Ba8 25 Qc4 Rfc8 26 Bh3 Rc7 27 Rfe1 and White holds on to the pawn.

21 ... c4!

With this surprising move Black wins back the pawn, transferring the game into a sharp four-rook endgame. The further course of the game is not relative to the problems of "hanging" pawns, and it is sufficient for us to point out that after **22 Bxe7 Qxe7 23 exd5 Qxe1 24 Rfxe1 cxb3 25 d6 Bxg2 26 Kxg2 Rb8 27 d7 g6?** (Correct is 27 ... Rfd8 and ... Kf8) **28 Ra1?** (A mistake in reply; 28 Rd4 Rfd8 29 Re3 a4 30 Re8+ Rxe8 31 dxe8(Q)+ Rxe8 32 Rxa4 and then Rb4 led to a winning

position.) **28 ... Rxb5 29 Re8 Rd5 30 Rxa5 Rxd7 31 Rxf8+ Kxf8 32 Rb5 Rd3** already Black was left with an extra passed and far advanced pawn. However, Alekhine chose an incorrect plan (advance of the pawns on the king's flank), created weaknesses in this sector of the board and Euwe achieved a draw with defensive technique.

The game reveals well both the positional weakness of "hanging" pawns and their potential strength, consisting of the threat to advance.

Chapter Five

More about active play with pawns

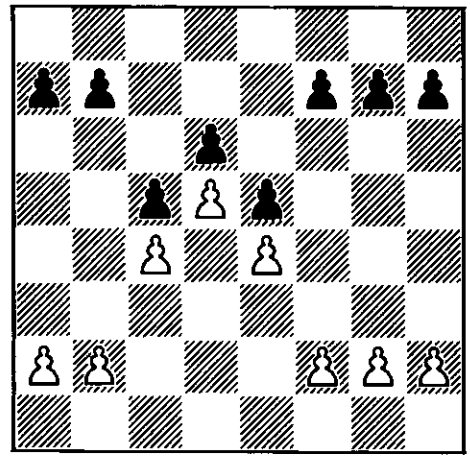
The pawn wedge and the reaction to it. The pawn nail. The phalanx of e and f-pawns. Pawn storm.

And so we have convinced ourselves that the role of the pawn in no way amounts to positional pressure, the control of squares of a certain colour, securing a handy base for piece forces; the pawns are also a powerful means of attack. Without active pawn support, a piece attack often turns out to be doomed to failure, running up against a defensive bristle of enemy pawns. Consequently, one of the main attacking tasks of pawns is the removal of the opponent's defensive pawn line in the sector serving as an object of a planned attack. If, however, such a pawn attack is launched against castling, then it often leads to the creation of direct mating threats to the exposed king.

In practice, with active pawn operations, well known is the formation in the centre bearing the graphic name pawn wedge. The scheme of "driving" such a wedge appears in the following form.

(see diagram next column)

It should be noted that the formation e4-d5-c4 (for Black e5-d4-c5) is called a wedge in the case when one of the opponent's pawns, adjacent to the wedging



pawns, is still on its original square c7 or e7 (c2 or e2). Such a wedge is more dynamic (prospects of advancing c4-c5 or e4-e5 for White, correspondinly ... c5-c4 or ... e5-e4 for Black), but in return less stable in view of the possibility of undermining it by the moves ... c7-c6 or ... e7-e6 (c2-c3 or e2-e3).

The undermining advance of the f-pawn serves as the basic method of struggle against the wedge. A careful assessment of the position will determine whether the construction of the wedge is favourable or unfavourable. The wedge, of course, allows the gain of space and cramps the opponent, but at the same time limits the dynamic resources and, on the contrary, increases them for the enemy due to clear prospects of a lively pawn action on the king's

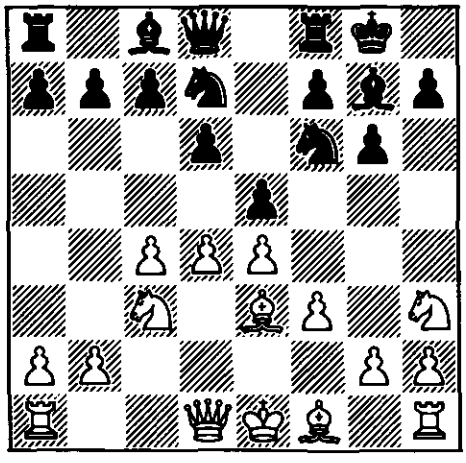
flank. It is hardly worthwhile constructing a wedge just to somewhat cramp the opponent. The construction of a wedge is justified only in that case when it is possible to count on retaining the initiative or at least where there is the possibility of preventing the advance of the enemy f-pawn.

White more often has recourse to a pawn wedge than Black. In several ideological variations of the King's Indian Defence or Spanish Game, it is a logical link in the plan of play.

The author of one interesting plan, entailing the construction of a wedge, in the King's Indian Defence, was **Nimzovich**. In his game with **Tartakover** (Carlsbad 1929) after

1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 g6 3 f3 Bg7 4 e4 d6 5 Nc3 0-0 6 Be3 Nbd7 7 Nh3 e5

the following position was reached.



Here, Nimzovich played **8 d5**, on which followed **8 ... a5**.

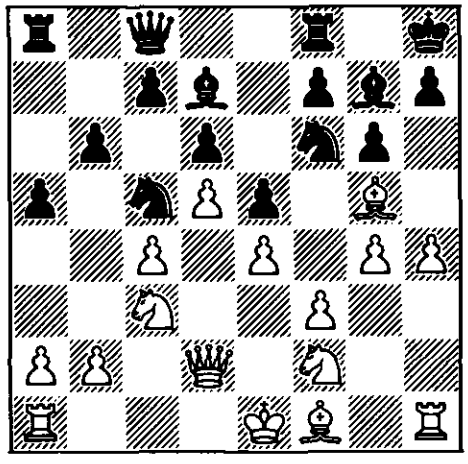
Black's plan consists of placing his knight on c5, for which its position is secured against the raid b4, and then transferring the other knight to h5, d7 or e8 and beginning conventional play on the basis of the undermining move ... f5. Such a plan has led to success time and again.

9 Nf2 b6 10 Qd2 Nc5 11 Bg5!

White pins the knight down to f6 and, in that period while Black will be trying to free himself from the pin, he intends to launch an energetic pawn offensive on the king's flank. This outlines Nimzovich's plan.

As indicated by Nimzovich himself, Black, on the 10th move, should have continued 10 ... Nh5 and, if 11 g4, then 11 ... Nf4! 12 Bxf4 exf4 13 Qxf4 f5 14 gxf5 gxf5 and 15 exf5 is bad in view of 15 ... Ne5 16 Bh3 Qh4.

11 ... Bd7 12 g4 Qc8 13 h4 Kh8



Black has not succeeded in playing ... f5, while on the king's flank it is White who is attacking. In these circumstances, the construction of the wedge is more than justified.

14 h5 gxh5 15 Bxf6 Bxf6 16

Rxh5

From now on the h5 and f5 squares prove to be excellent bases for White's pieces, and on this foundation he gains victory.

After this game, the idea of the wedge, with the future attack of the h and g-pawns, found widespread application in chess practice.

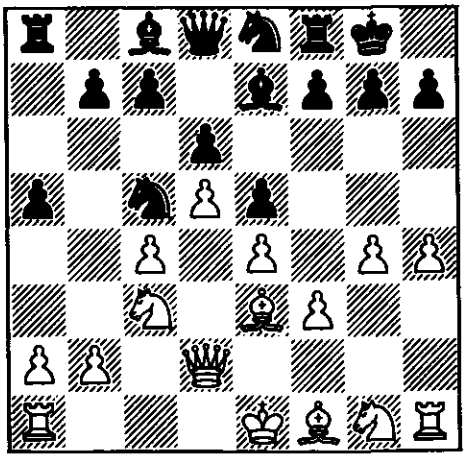
Makogonov-Smyslov, Sverdlovsk 1943, saw a similar plan: **1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 d6 3 Nc3 Nbd7 4 e4 e5 5 d5**

And so, without hesitation, White goes for the wedge. Many would prefer here to fight to maintain the tension in the centre by continuing 5 Nf3. Likewise, a good plan of development was 5 g3, followed by Nge2 and Bg2, trying to retain the d5 square as a point for a possible piece invasion.

5 ... Nc5 6 f3 a5 7 Be3 Be7

The development of the bishop to g7 makes no sense in the light of White's plan. The latter's arrangement of pieces is virtually the same as Nimzovich's in the previous game.

8 Qd2 0-0 9 g4 Ne8 10 h4!



10 ... c6

Black must do something about the wedge which is hampering him. True, for the present there is nothing threatening the Black king since its pawn cover is still in its original position, but there is a way for White to further develop his initiative, for example the manoeuvre Ng1-e2-g3-f5. Risky is 10 ... Bxh4+ 11 Kd1 Be7 12 Qh2 h6 13 Bxh6 or 11 ... g5 12 Qh2 f6 13 Bf2, and White, winning back the pawn, maintains active chances on the open h-file.

11 0-0-0 cxd5

Better is at once 11 ... a4, followed by ... Qa5, retaining pressure on the d5 point.

12 Nxd5 Be6 13 Ne2 Bxd5 14 exd5 a4

Clearing the centre (14 ... e4 15 fxe4 Nxe4 16 Qc2 Nc5 17 g5 f6 18 Kb1) is to White's advantage.

15 Nc3 Qa5

Also now 15 ... Bxh4 is dangerous because of 16 g5 Bg3 17 Ne2.

16 Nb5

The d5 pawn remains standing and severely cramps Black.

16 ... Qb6

Black has a weak pawn configuration on the queen's flank and this prompts him to avoid exchanges. In fact, after 16 ... Qxd2+ 17 Rxd2 b6 18 Bd3 White has a powerful position and the a4 pawn is doomed.

17 Qf2 Rd8 18 a3 Nc7 19 Bxc5

Leading to a forced win of the a4 pawn.

19 ... dxc5 20 Nc3 Qa5 21 Bd3 b5 22 Qc2 bxc4 23 Bxc4

Also good enough is 23 Bxh7+ Kh8 24 Qf5 Ne8 25 Ne4.

23 ... Qb6 24 Nxa4 Qf6 25 Qe4 Bd6 26 Nc3 Rb8 27 g5 Qd8 28 Rdg1

Even more energetic is 28 Bd3 g6 29 Rdg1 followed by h5.

28 ... Ne8 29 h5 Kh8 30 Qf5

Preparing 31 Bd3, which at once would be repulsed by the reply 30 ... f5.

30 ... Qc8

The only defence against Bd3, but now White without difficulty wins the endgame in which he has, in addition to an extra pawn, also a positional superiority due to the excellent piece base on e4 and the passed pawn on d5, which is the consequence of the opening construction of the wedge. The remaining part of the game is of no interest for our theme; **Black resigned** on the 54th move.

In the following game White went in for the wedge, ignoring the conventional reaction ... f5. It was not long before the latter began to tell.

Bogolyubov-Indian Defence
White: **V.Alatortsev**
Black: **G.Levenfish**
(10th USSR Championship 1937)

1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 e6 3 g3 Bb4+ 4 Bd2 Bxd2+ 5 Nxd2

The black-squared bishops have been exchanged. This circumstance must have a certain bearing on the opponent's plans.

5 ... Nc6 6 Ngf3 d6

Black prepares ... e5, which fully conforms to the exchange of bishops: it is precisely the black squares in the centre which the pawn takes under control. The other plan with ... d5 was less logical and made it difficult for Black to develop his queen's flank.

7 Bg2 e5 8 d5

Here this wedge form of invasion has little foundation. It might have some justification if White were to succeed later in beginning a headlong advance in the centre by playing e4 and f4. The wedge ought to cramp Black, but here the basic motive of the cramping - restriction of the activity of the king's bishop - is absent. Moreover, with the move d5 White actually limits the sphere of action of the king's bishop, only not the enemy's but his own. He should continue 8 e3 exd4 9 Nxd4 Nxd4 10 exd4 Qe7+ 11 Qe2 or 8 Nb3 Qe7 9 e3, maintaining relative equilibrium.

8 ... Ne7 9 0-0 0-0 10 e4

Even now, 10 e3 was better, so as, for example, on 10 ... c6 to play 11 dxc6 bxc6 12 Qc2 followed by Rad1 or 11 ... Nxc6 12 Qe2 d5 13 cxd5 Nxd5 14 Rfd1.

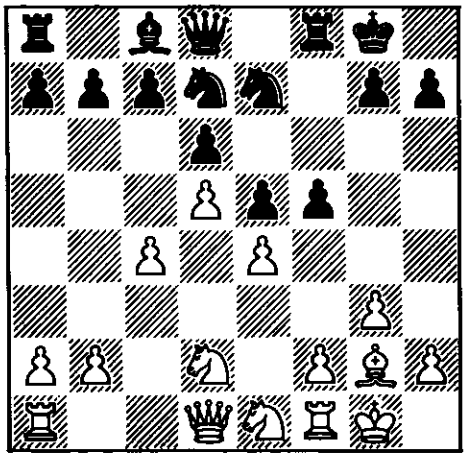
10 ... Nd7

Black obviously intends to carry out ... f5. White also should construct his plan, bearing in mind this possibility; after ... f5 he can take

the pawn and, exploiting the e4 square as a piece base, strive for play on the queen's flank with the move c5.

11 Ne1 f5

He does not have a moment to lose, since after Nd3 White threatens counterplay by f4.



12 Nd3?

Again played without regard for the opponent's plan. It was necessary either to take the pawn on f5, followed by Ne4, or even decide on f4. After 12 ... exf4 13 gxf4 fxe4 14 Nxe4 Nf5 15 Nc2, weaknesses appear for White, but they can be defended.

12 ... f4

In this way Black develops an initiative and at the same time prevents White's prepared f4.

13 gxf4

This exchange is by no means forced. True, if White does not take this pawn, then after ... Ng6 it threatens to turn into a pawn "wedge", driven into the opponent's position. However, after 13 f3 h5 or the comparatively better 13 Bh3 g5 14 Qh5 Ng6 15 Be6+ Kg7 16 Nf3 h6 17 Bf5 Qe8, despite having the worse position he retains possibilities of defence. But now Black obtains a firm piece base in the very centre of the board - the e5 square, on the basis of which he eventually achieves victory. In this light, the opening construction of the wedge looks especially doubtful for White.

13 ... exf4 14 Nf3 Ng6 15 Rc1 Qe7 16 Re1 Nde5 17 Nfxe5 Nxe5 18 f3 b6 19 Nxe5 Qxe5

After ... Bd7, Black threatens to begin a decisive pawn offensive on the king's flank with the moves ... g5 and ... h5. White hastens to force the exchange of queens, but this also does not help much.

20 Qd2 Bd7 21 Qc3 Rfe8 22 Qxe5 Rxe5 23 a3 a5 24 b3 Kf7 25 Kf2 Kf6 26 Ke2 Rh5 27 Rh1 Ke5

and **White lost** after Black had carried out the advance ... g5-g4, since even at the moment of surrender the notorious c4-d5-e4 wedge was still standing intact in all its splendour.

In conclusion we look at a few games where the question of the wedge is elucidated in the light of a single planned process.

Reti Opening

White: **J.R.Capablanca**

Black: **F.Marshall**

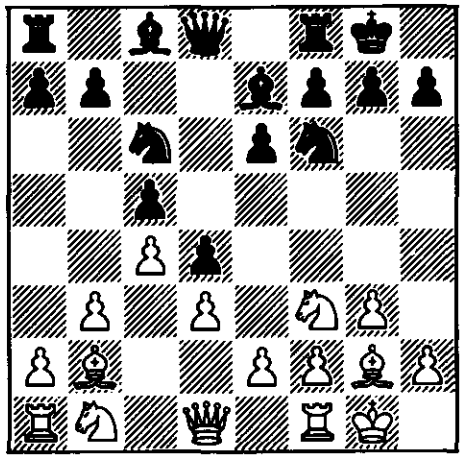
(Moscow 1925)

1 Nf3 Nf6 2 c4 e6 3 g3 d5 4 b3 c5 5 Bg2 Nc6 6 0-0 Be7

Both now and in the future, White not only is not afraid of the construction of Black's wedge, but even provokes it on ... d4. There are, however, chessplayers who do not like to contend with the triangle of pawns in the centre and prefer 7 cxd5 Nxd5 (if 7 ... exd5, then 8 d4 with play on the isolated d5 pawn) 8 Bb2; after 8 ... Bf6 the activity of both the White bishops is appreciably limited.

7 d3 0-0 8 Bb2 d4

One can judge the extent of the difference of opinion, held even by leading chess authorities, about the role of the wedge, by the fact that one of the commentators of the present game, Bogolyubov, placed an exclamation mark against this move, adding "it is clear that White's opening has been strategically refuted". Capablanca obviously held another point of view.



9 e4!

A problem move! White wants to provoke the reply ... e5 and then begin to prepare the break f4, which serves as a reliable means of contending with the wedge. This, of course, does not mean that he will without fail gain the advantage if he fulfils such a plan. When White plays f4, Black must be ready to reply to it ... exf4, and, after gxf4, ... f5. The further course of events might turn out something like this: 9 ... e5 10 a3 a5 11 Nbd2 Bd7 12 Qc2 Ne8 13 Rae1 Qc7 14 Kh1 Nd6 15 Ng1 Nd8 16 Ne2 Ne6 17 f4 exf4 18 gxf4 f5 19 e5 Nf7 20 Ng3 Nh6 followed by ... Bc6, and Black has a right to cherish hopes of success in the struggle for the initiative.

Alas, Marshall chooses another way, which radically contradicts the opening idea of the wedge construction.

9 ... dxe3?

Black opens an operational f-file for White, obligingly gives his queen's bishop the long diagonal and demolishes his own wedge, obtaining nothing in return. One cannot consider the e3 and d3 pawns weaknesses in White's position. They are easily defended; in fact it is no use, in essence, for Black to even attack them. The very same pawns play a great role, keeping the central squares under control.

10 fxe3 Ng4 11 Qe2 Bf6 12 Nc3 Qa5

Black has made three attacking moves in a row, but on this his initiative runs dry.

13 Rac1 Rd8

Weakening the f7 pawn and

accelerating his defeat. But also after 13 ... Bd7 14 h3 Nge5 15 Nd2, White has an overwhelming positional advantage in connection with the threats of Nce4 and Rxf6.

14 h3 Nge5 15 Ne4

A very strong blow, quickly demolishing Black's position. If now 15 ... Nxf3+, then 16 Qxf3, underlining the weakness of the f7 point. Also bad is 15 ... Qc7 16 Nxf6+ gxf6 17 Nxe5 fxe5 18 Qg4+ Kh8 19 Bxc6.

15 ... Qxa2 16 Nxf6+ gxf6 17 Nxe5 Nxe5 18 Be4 Bd7 19 Ra1 Qxb3 20 Rfb1

Black could lay down his arms, since he loses the queen. However, the further following moves were made in the game.

20 ... Qb4 21 Bxe5 fxe5 22 Rxb4 cxb4 23 Bxb7 Rab8 24 Rxa7 b3 25 Qb2 Ba4 26 Qxe5 Bc6 27 Qg5+ Kf8 28 Bxc6 b2 29 Qe7+ 1:0 as Black is mated in two moves.

Black's downfall came about mainly as a consequence of his 9th move. The pawn at the head of the wedge should be maintained in its advanced position and not be given up, unless, of course, this is prompted by concrete considerations.

Reti Opening
White: **G.Levenfish**
Black: **I.Kan**
(Moscow 1927)

1 Nf3 Nf6 2 c4 e6 3 g3 b6 4 Bg2 Bb7 5 0-0 Be7 6 Nc3 0-0 7 Qc2 c5 8 b3 Nc6 9 Bb2 d5 10 d3

White allows the move ... d4 and Black's future triangular wedge formation.

Admittedly, it would hardly be better to try and prevent this by 10 cxd5, on which not bad are both 10 ... Nb4 and the simple 10 ... Nxd5, and if 11 Nxd5, then 11 ... Qxd5 and 12 Ne5? does not work in view of 12 ... Qxg2+! 13 Kxg2 Nd4+.

10 ... d4

And so the die is cast. Black wedges in his pawn on d4, where it restricts White's possibilities for manoeuvering. However, as becomes clear from the further course of the game, Black does not have a concrete idea in mind with this decision, and as a result he does not succeed in exploiting the positive side of the wedge (cramping the opponent), while the negative side - the possibility of a retaliatory advance by White with f4 - soon tells in full measure.

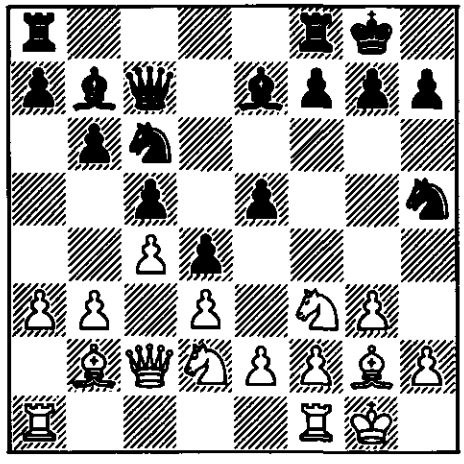
11 Nb1 Qc7

In order to prepare 12 ... e5, but what does Black achieve by such a pawn advance? It increases the significance of White's plan with f4, exposes the f5 square in his own camp and achieves nothing concrete. The advance ... e5 justifies itself in those cases when there are prospects of a future pawn advance ... e4, for example when Black succeeds in playing ... f5. He should consider the manoeuvre ...

Nd7-e5, at the same time intending ... f5, with the pawn on e6.

12 Nbd2 e5 13 a3 Nh5.

With the threat of playing ... f5 and then setting about the execution of the plan linked with the advance ... e4.



14 e4!

White is the first to start active operations in the centre, beginning to prepare the break f4. The preparation requires no little effort: it is necessary to play Rae1, Bc1, Kh1, Ng1, then Ndf3-h4, and only after this f4. Can a way be found for Black, during this period, to counter this plan?

14 ... Bc8?

Black plays without a plan, he simply manoeuvres with his pieces. Many of his moves give a stereotyped impression. Also in the present case he apparently considers that the bishop will be better placed in the centre and transfers it to e6. Meanwhile, in order to prevent or at least put up resistance to the opponent's plan, he should himself strive for ... f5. If played immediately, this move is bad, since after the reply exf5 White obtains an excellent base for his pieces on the e4 square, while the e5 pawn becomes a real weakness. Therefore it is necessary to make the preparatory move 14 ... g6, now threatening ... f5; if then exf5, Black takes on f5 with the g-pawn. Admittedly, this pawn attack is temporarily prevented by the move 15 Rae1 (15 ... f5 16 exf5 gxf5 17 Nxe5 Nxe5 18 Bxb7 Qxb7 19 Rxe5), but then Black could continue the struggle by ... Bd6 or ... Bf6-g7 followed by ... Rae8. The construction of the wedge might be fully justified with such a plan - you see White is rather cramped and because of this it is significantly easier for Black to carry out manoeuvering in his rear lines of communication. However, instead of this active play, he carries out piece manoeuvres without a clear planned aim, and above all he does not prevent the opponent fulfilling his highly active plan.

15 Rae1 Be6 16 Kh1 Qd7

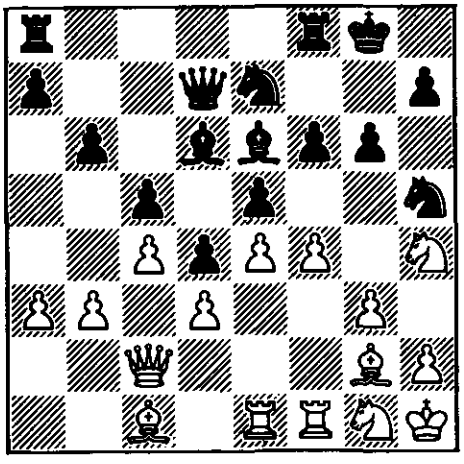
In threatening ... Bh3, Black forces White to play a move which ... enters into his plan.

17 Ng1 Bd6 18 Bc1 g6 19 Ndf3! f6

Now 19 ... f5 is already not good in view of 20 exf5 gxf5 21 Ng5 with dangerous threats. On 21 ... Ng7, a strong continuation of the attack is 22 f4. Generally speaking, for the time being Black should guard his white-squared bishop

against exchange, since his pawn chain only exerts pressure on the black squares. However, for this, the return of the queen to c7 (19 ... Qc7 20 Ng5 Bd7) makes sense, incidentally creating a fourth strike on the f4 square and slowing down White's attack with f4.

20 Nh4 Ne7 21 f4



And so White succeeds in carrying out an operation which serves as a principal means of struggle against the wedge construction. Now he threatens to play f5, exploiting the fact that the rook a8 is under the sights of the bishop g2, but Black removes the rook from the dangerous square and, on the face of it, the attack runs into a blind alley.

21 ... Rab8

It is precisely here that the rook moves to, in order to support active operations on the queen's flank after ... b5.

22 f5

At the cost of a sacrifice of a pawn, White strives to find handy white-squared positions for his pieces. This is perhaps the only continuation of the attack. The sacrifice must be accepted since, in the event of 22 ... Bf7 23 fxg6 Bxg6 24 Bh6 Ng7 25 Bh3, White would control the whole board.

22 ... gxf5 23 Bh6 Ng7 24 exf5 Nexf5 25 Nxf5 Bxf5 26 Nf3 Be6

After 26 ... Bh3 27 Nh4 Bxg2+ 28 Qxg2 Rf7 29 Bxg7 Kxg7 30 Nf5+ White obtains an overwhelming positional advantage (the "eternal knight").

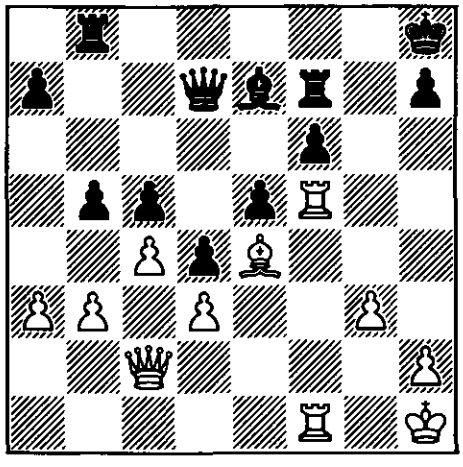
27 Rf2 Rf7 28 Nh4 b5

Black places his hopes on the opening of the queen's flank, but he could organise a more successful defence by giving back the pawn by 28 ... f5 and, if 29 Nf3, then 29 ... e4 30 dxe4 fxe4 31 Qxe4 Bf5 32 Qh4 Bg6 (the same possibility presents itself also on the next move). A sharp situation arises where White also has to be thoughful. However, after Black's decision to hold on to the extra pawn, he gets into a difficult position.

29 Ref1 Be7 30 Bxg7 Kxg7 31 Nf5+ Kh8 32 Be4 Bxf5 33 Rxf5

On the board are opposite coloured bishops. In the endgame this often serves to guarantee a draw even when the opponent has a considerable material advantage. On the other hand, in the middlegame the presence of opposite coloured bishops quite often makes it easier for the attacking side to achieve victory. Usually this depends on the arrangement of the

pawn chain. In the present game, the principal group of Black pawns extends over four squares - f6-e5-d4-c5 (the wedge!). Meanwhile, he has a black-squared bishop which comes up against a barrier everywhere, in the shape of its own pawns. Another matter is the opponent's bishop, centering fire on the white squares which are the most important main lines on the board. If we add to this the fact that Black has a weak pawn on f6, his king is insecurely placed, its last cover - the h7 point - exposed to attack, and the enemy rooks dominate the weak white squares in the region of the king's flank, then it becomes clear that White has achieved a decisive advantage.



33 ... Rg7 34 Qd2 bxc4 35 bxc4 Rb6

As before, the wedge stands firm in the centre of the board, but already it is not a joy but a sorrow for Black.

36 Qh6 Bd8 37 a4 a5

On 37 ... Qxa4 would have followed 38 Rxe5.

38 Bd5

Now White himself threatens the move Rxe5.

38 ... Qe7 39 Qh5

Of course he need not hurry since Black's position is quite helpless, but all the same 39 g4 was more energetic. He cannot take the pawn in view of 40 Rxe5, but, on the other hand, how can he prevent g5?

39 ... Rg6 40 R5f2 Qd7 41 Be4 Rg5 42 Qh6 Qg7 43 Qh3 Qc7 44 Qh6 Qg7 45 Qh3 Qc7

The time-control moves, which obviously explain the repetitive queen manoeuvres, are over and White sets about completing his plan - the realisation of his positional "white-squared" advantage. Material advantage - an extra pawn - is still on the opponent's side.

46 Rf5 Rxf5

If 46 ... Rg7, then 47 g4 Rb2 48 g5 Rxg5 49 Rxg5 fxg5 50 Qh6, and the struggle is over. If the rook is placed on b6 in this variation then 50 Rf8+ Kg7 51 Re8 Rh6 52 Qf5 Qd6 (Bf6) 53 Bd5 is decisive.

47 Rxf5 Rd6

The counterattack by ... Rb1+ is also useless. Black cannot include the queen in this due to the weakness of the h7 point.

48 g4 Rd7 49 g5! fxg5

The endgame after 49 ... Rf7 50 g6 Rg7 51 Rh5 Qd7 52 Rxh7+ Rxh7 53 Qxh7+ Qxh7 54 gxh7 is utterly hopeless.

50 Rxe5?

After this mistaken move, Black

saves himself. Thus a single tactical inaccuracy sometimes makes futile many moves of effort, construction on the right plan and correct strategy. 50 Rf8+ Kg7 51 Re8! with the deadly threat Qxh7 mate led to quick mate. If 51 ... h6, then 52 Qf5; also no better is 51 ... Kf6 52 Qh6+ or Qf5+.

50 ... Qxe5 51 Qxd7 Qe7

Now the opposite coloured bishops herald a draw and the game soon ended with this result.

We look at one more example, characteristic for contemporary creative and theoretical tendencies.

King's Indian Defence
White: **L.Polugayevsky**
Black: **A.Suetin**
(25th USSR Championship 1958)

1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 g6 3 Nc3 Bg7 4 e4 d6 5 f3

This is a long-standing way of playing against the King's Indian Defence for White, and has recently become more and more frequently met in practice. It is well-known that in his return match with Smyslov, Botvinnik likewise stuck to this treatment of the opening. The apparently very modest move of the f-pawn has great planning significance. It extends far beyond the limits of a simple striving to reinforce one of the main links of the pawn centre - the e4 pawn. White's plan consists of the construction of a wedge with a subsequent meeting of the counterattack ... f5 with g4. If Black refrains from ... f5, then he will not only turn out to be severely cramped by the wedge, but White will also have the possibility of developing a dangerous pawn attack on the king's flank by h4-h5. All these "trumps" are exploited by White in the present game.

5 ... 0-0 6 Be3 e5

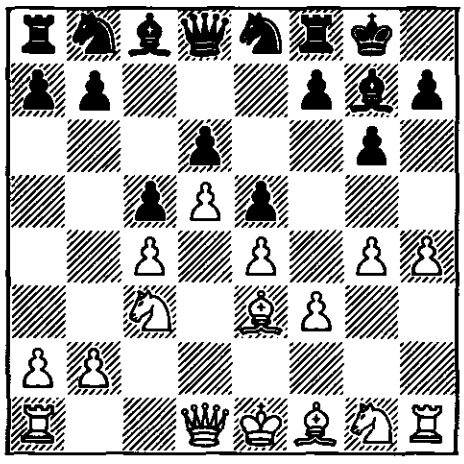
If Black does not take measures to determine the position in the centre, then, after Qd2 and 0-0-0, White without difficulty develops a threatening attack on the king's flank (g4, h4-h5, Bh6) under the cover of the pawn centre. With this it becomes clear that Black submits to the construction of the opponent's wedge, intending, even after g4, to sharpen the game with the advance ... f5.

In his last match with Botvinnik, Smyslov tried to counter White's plan with energetic pawn play on the queen's flank (... a6, ...c6, and ... b5). This counterattacking idea has still not received sufficient practical trials; in any event it did not justify itself in the match.

7 d5 c5

Such a blockade of the c4 pawn is usually linked to an attack on the pawn wedge from the side of the queen's flank. Black strives in the future for ... a6 and ... b5. In the present game it does not come to this and the move ... c5 loses its clearness of purpose.

8 g4 Ne8 9 h4



This position eloquently bears witness to how contemporary notions have changed concerning the opening struggle. According to classical principles, the principal opening task has still not been accomplished: the pieces are virtually undeveloped, it is mainly the pawns which have advanced (White's will make 7 moves out of the first 10!). And yet, despite the opinion of some opening theoreticians, the opening stage can be considered over. The plans of the opponents, particularly White, are determined, but the struggle of the plans - is already a process of the middlegame.

The diagrammed position was reached in two more encounters in the same tournament, i.e.: Tal-Boleslavsky (played earlier than the present game) and Kotov-Spassky (played later). The first ended in a victory for Black, the second - for White; admittedly these results could only be attributed to a small extent to the opening.

9 ... f5

A bold and consistent plan was chosen by Spassky against Kotov: 9 ... a6 10 Bd3 b5. White did not risk accepting the pawn sacrifice, but Black all the same succeeded in creating a dangerous attack on the b-file on the queen's flank, to counterbalance the opponent's play on the king's side.

Boleslavsky, against Tal, also played 9 ... f5.

10 gxf5 gxf5 11 exf5

White strives to exchange the white-squared bishops (11 ... Bxf5 12 Bd3), after which the piece base on e4 and the dangerous weakening of the e6 square, in connection with the threat Nh3-g5-e6, guarantees him good prospects.

Boleslavsky for his part against Tal, decided on an interesting pawn sacrifice - 11 ... Bxf5 12 Bd3 e4. In the present game, taking into account the experience of the Tal-Boleslavsky encounter, Black chose another continuation.

11 ... Bf6

Not so much to win the h4 pawn, since the opening of the h-file is very risky, as with the aim of taking the f5 pawn with the knight (... Ng7xf5).

12 Bd3 Ng7!

In the event of 12 ... Bxh4+ 13 Kd2 Bxf5 14 Bxf5 Rxf5 15 Qe2 followed by Nh3 and Rag1+, White's attack develops all by itself.

13 Qe2 Bxh4+

All the same, Black yields to temptation, obviously underesti-

mating the opened h-file and overestimating the instability of the White king's position. Instead of the risky capture of the pawn, he should stick to the planned line and try to retain the white-squared bishop, which plays a great role in the defence of the king's flank and the e6 and e4 squares. Upon the continuation 13 ... Nxf5 14 Bxf5 Bxf5 15 0-0-0 Kh8 16 Nh3 Nd7, White of course has the initiative but Black could successfully withstand the pressure of the wedge.

14 Kd2 Bxf5

Also after 14 ... Nxf5 15 Bxf5 Bxf5 16 Nh3, White has a threatening attack.

15 Ne4

White threatens to take the pawn on d6. Unsatisfactory is 15 ... Bxe4 16 Bxe4, and the h7 point is indefensible.

15 ... Be7 16 Nh3 b5 17 Rag1 bxc4 18 Bc2 Qa5+ 19 Nc3 Bxc2 20 Kxc2

The attack on the g and h-files cannot be repulsed.

20 ... Na6 21 Bh6 Nb4+ 22 Kb1 Rf7 23 Ng5 Bxg5 24 Rxg5 Rb8 25 Bxg7 Rxg7 26 Rxg7+ Kxg7 27 Qe4 Rh8 28 Qf5 1:0

The threatening destructive force contained in pawn attacks can show itself not only in groups of pawns but also in a single pawn, particularly when we have the business of the so-called pawn-nail. With this we have in mind a pawn which breaks through to the 6th (for Black - the 3rd) rank and establishes itself on it. It can indeed be compared to a nail, hammered deeply into the position of the enemy forces.

If the wedge, that is a pawn consolidated on the 5th rank, cramps the opponent, then the nail on the 6th rank pins down his forces and serves as a support for the most dangerous attacking pieces.

We illustrate this statement with some examples.

One of the sharp variations of the Italian Game proceeds in the following way: **1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bc4 Bc5 4 c3 Nf6 5 d4 exd4 6 cxd4 Bb4+ 7 Nc3 Nxe4 8 0-0 0-0**

Here the opening manuals look mainly at the continuation 8 ... Bxc3 9 d5 Bf6 10 Re1 Ne7 11 Rxe4, known under the name of the Möller Attack. The move

8 ... 0-0

was employed in **Spielmann-E. Cohn**, played in the international tournament at Carlsbad 1907. We look at this game now.

9 d5 Bxc3 10 bxc3 Ne7 11 Re1 Nf6

11 ... Nxc3 is unsatisfactory in view of 12 Qd4 b5 13 Bg5.

12 d6!

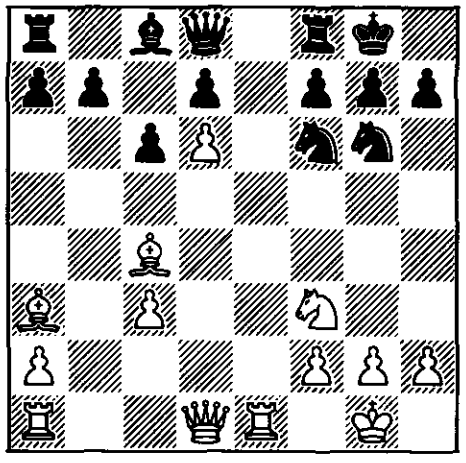
White tries to "hammer in the nail" on d6, and he surprisingly succeeds in doing this.

12 ... Ng6?

12 ... cxd6 was obligatory.

13 Ba3! c6

But now it is already too late for 13 ... cxd6; on this follows 14 Bxd6 Re8 15 Qb3 Nh8 16 Ne5 or Ng5 with an irresistible attack.



14 Ne5

White's plan is determined. Under the cover of the pawn-nail, pinning down the opponent, he intends to come down upon the Black king's position with his superior forces. With his last move, White eliminates one of the Black knights covering the castled position. Black is not in a position to repulse this onslaught. The reserves on the queen's flank, held back by the pawn-nail, do not succeed in getting across to help.

14 ... Nxe5 15 Rxe5 b6 16 Qf3 Bb7 17 Rae1 Rb8 18 Bc1 b5

On 18 ... c5 follows 19 Qh3 with the threat Bg5.

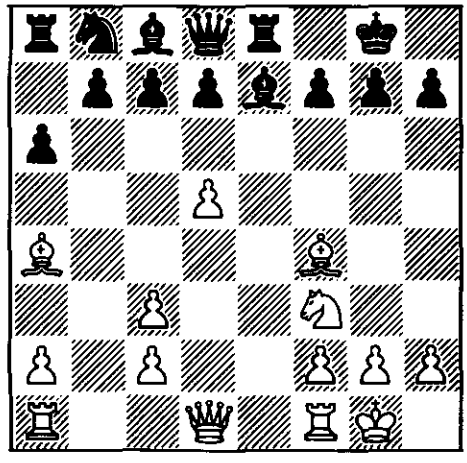
19 Bd3 Nd5

In the event of 19 ... h6, to rid himself of Bg5, Black is doomed to a quick downfall after 20 Re7.

20 Bxh7+ 1:0

Mate is inevitable. A beautiful variation is 20 ... Kxh7 21 Rh5+ Kg8 22 Qh3 g6 23 Rh8+ Kg7 24 Qh6+ Kf6 25 Rh7 Kf5 26 Qh3+ Kf6 27 Qh4+ Kf5 28 g4 mate. Of course, mate can also be forced by other means.

Maroczy exploited the strength of the pawn-nail, in instructive fashion, on the same d6 point in a game against **Pillsbury** in the international tournament at Nürnberg 1896.



12 ... Bf6?

Black gives White the possibility of "hammering in the nail" on d6. Of course, Pillsbury saw the move 13 d6, but Black's position is generally unsatisfactory due to his backwardness in development. The variation 12 ... b5 13 Bb3 d6 14 Nd4 must be just as bad. The powerful knight can only be eliminated by means of the exchange ... Bf6xd4, but in this case White has a great positional advantage.

13 d6 c6

Allowing the enemy bishop on to the weak d6 square, after 13 ... cxd6 would also be miserable.

14 Bb3 b5 15 Qd2 Bb7 16 Ng5 Rf8 17 Ne4 a5 18 a3 Na6

Black's trouble lies in the fact that he does not succeed in bringing his queen's rook into the battle, and the White pawn-nail on d6 is the most to blame for this.

19 Rae1 c5 20 Bd5 Bxd5 21 Qxd5 b4 22 Re3 Bxc3

Black's position is difficult, but this move ought to have led to immediate loss.

23 Rxc3?

The variation 23 Nxc3 bxc3 24 Bg5 Q-moves 25 Bf6 gxf6 26 Rg3+ Kh8 27 Qf5 leads to mate.

23 ... bxc3 24 Bg5 Nc7

On a move of the queen, the check on f6 is decisive. It is not hard to convince oneself that all these attacks are based once again on the powerful position of the pawn nail.

25 Qc4 Qe8 26 dxc7

26 Nf6+ is also winning.

26 ... Qe5 27 Rd1 Rfe8 28 Rxd7 Kh8 29 Qxf7 Qxg5 30 f4 Qg4 31 h3 Qxd7 32 Qxd7 Rxe4 33 c8Q+ 1:0

The pawn nail queens.

Let us look at a game where the pawn-nail is the main aim of the plan of attack and the basis for creating a mating position.

Spanish Game
White: **R.Teichmann**
Black: **A.Rubinstein**
(Carlsbad 1911)

1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bb5 a6 4 Ba4 Nf6 5 0-0 Be7 6 Re1 b5 7 Bb3 d6 8 c3 0-0 9 d3

9 h3 followed by d4 is met more frequently in contemporary practice. The modest (in appearance!) move chosen by White in the present game does not mean giving up the advance of the pawn to d4; it only postpones this advance to a later time, with the intention of preparing it more thoroughly. However, such a slow tactic also opens up the possibility for Black of a harmonious mobilisation of forces and therefore it is no surprise that the present variation is met comparatively rarely.

9 ... Na5 10 Bc2 c5 11 Nbd2 Nc6

This position was met in a number of games played in the 30's. Black, as shown by practice, should not be in a hurry with the counterattack ... d5, but carefully prepare it with the moves ... Qc7, ... Be6 and ... Rad8.

In the game Alekhine-Eliskases, (Podebrady 1936) was played 12 Nf1 Re8 13 Ne3 d5? 14 exd5 Nxd5 15 Nxd5 Qxd5 16 d4! exd4 17 Be4 and White had a strong initiative which led to victory already on the 25th move.

12 a4 Bb7

The development of the queen's bishop on the long diagonal in this variation is not very well grounded. The activity of the bishop is very limited due to the d3 and e4 pawns; however the main defect of this idea consists of the dangerous weakening of the f5 square, precisely towards which

the knight heads along the route-march Nf1-g3-f5.

Black had several comfortable continuations, out of which 12 ... Be6 deserved the most consideration.

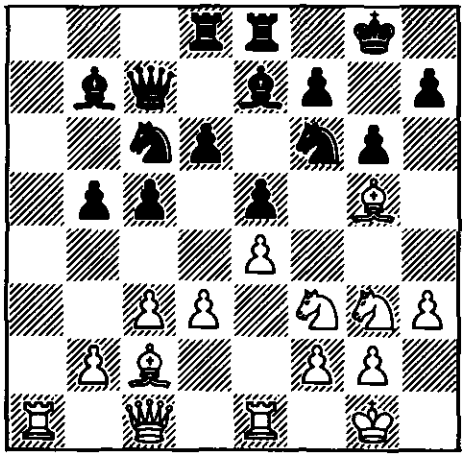
13 Nf1 Qc7 14 Ng3 g6

The knight cannot be allowed on f5 and he has to create an unpleasant weakness on the king's flank.

15 Bg5 Rad8 16 axb5 axb5 17 Qc1 Rfe8 18 h3

The beginning of a great plan of attack, at the basis of which lies the advance of the f-pawn.

18 ... Ra8



If we recall Black's 15th move then this could be regarded as a very clear loss of tempo. In fact this is not so. White has opened the a-file and this radically changed the situation, so Rubinstein thought, rather to his advantage in so far as White's intended activity on the king's flank can be countered by play on the a-file by ... Rxa1 followed by ... Ra8. 19 Qd2 Ra5 and ... Rea8 does not change matters.

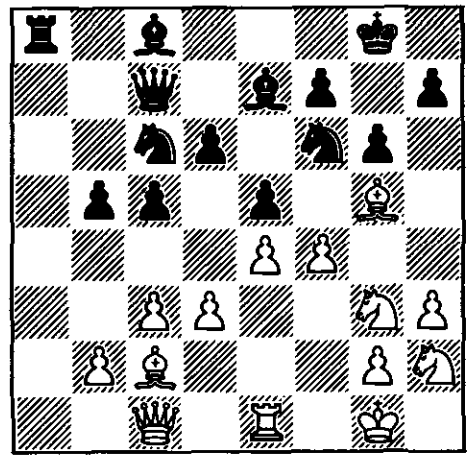
And yet this consideration is not well founded. White's plan consists of a transfer of the knight to g4, where it will attack the weakened f6 and h6 squares, but mainly of the advance of the f-pawn.

A careful look at variations connected with the execution of this plan shows that his threats are created quite quickly. Therefore White voluntarily concedes the a-file, concentrating all his efforts on an attack of the castled position.

19 Rxa8!

With this exchange, White retains his queen in the centre, from where it would have been diverted in the event of Rxa1, and at the same time diverts one of Black's pieces, the bishop or rook, from defence of the king's flank.

19 ... Rxa8 20 Nh2 Bc8 21 f4



What can Black do against this dangerous offensive? Apart from the reply 21 ... Ne8, chosen by Rubinstein and proving to be in-

sufficient for defence of the weaknesses in the castled position, Black has available two plans of defence.

The first is based on the move 21 ... exf4, which on the face of it is bad since Black himself opens an artery of attack on the f7 point and helps the enemy queen to get on to this artery. Another plan consists of maintaining the pawn tension "f4-e5" and leaving White to decide whether to eliminate this tension by the exchange fxe5 or to further advance the f-pawn to f5.

With the second plan, the most purposeful move seems 21 ... Bd7 in order to include the rook in the defence of the king's flank. However, careful analysis shows that after 21 Rf1 with the threat fxe5 the future struggle must turn out unfavourably for Black. On 22 ... Qd8, which incidentally once again cuts off the rook from the king's flank, possible is 23 f5 Kg7 24 Ng4, and it is difficult to defend the f6 point. However, the continuation 23 ... h5 (instead of 23 ... Kg7) with the aim of preventing the knight from going to g4, is unsatisfactory in view of 24 fxg6 fxg6 25 Bxf6 Bxf6 26 Qh6!

Both these variations and the actual course of the game convince one that it is dangerous for Black to allow the advance f5. There remains to look concretely at the consequences of the "bad" reply 21 ... exf4. Further events would probably have developed like this: 21 ... exf4 22 Qxf4 Qd8 23 Rf1 Kg7; then Black could reinforce the f7 point by the move ... Ra7; if 24 Ne2, preparing d4, then possible is 24 ... Bd7 25 d4 exd4 26 cxd4 Be8 with new defensive resources, since the knight f6 is freed from defence of the f7 point. Of course, White gets an initiative but he does not obtain that forcing attack which he obtains in connection with f5.

On the basis of Rubinstein's plan of defence, the following ideas come out of his actions: the exchange of the black-squared bishops (clearing the atmosphere), the concentration of three defenders on the f6 point - the king, the knight, the queen - against three possible White blows: the queen and rook on the f-file and the knight from the g4 square. And yet with this he does not take into account the weakness of the h6 square, which likewise serves as an object of White's attack. However, allowing the pawn nail on the f-file, which in the end will be hammered in on the f6 square, proves to be a decisive help to this attack.

21 ... Ne8 22 f5

Now White threatens to increase the pressure by Rf1 followed by Ng4-h6+.

22 ... Bxg5 23 Qxg5 Qe7 24 Qh6 Qf8 25 Qc1 Qg7 26 Rf1 g5

This move, which furthermore gives White the h5 point (and you

see that this is an approach to the critical f6 square), makes it easier for his opponent to carry out the attack. The most stubborn defence, preventing the hostile knight rampaging on the weak squares of the king's flank, was 26 ... h5, but also in this case White has a very strong initiative. Possible is 27 fxg6 fxg6 28 Nf3, invading on g5, or 27 Qd1 with the threat 28 fxg6 fxg6 29 Bb3+.

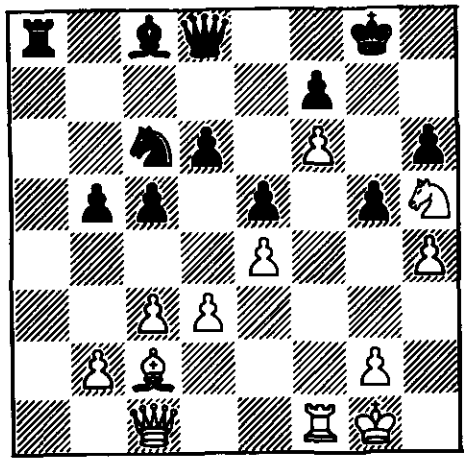
27 Ng4 Nf6

The defence 27 ... f6 looks more reliable, but on this follows 28 Bb3+ Kh8 (28 ... c4 29 dxc4 Na5 30 Qd1) 29 Nh5 Qf8 30 Bd5 Bb7 31 h4 h6 (31 ... gxh4 32 Nh6) 32 hxg5 hxg5 33 Rf3 with the irresistible threat Rh3.

28 Nxf6+ Qxf6 29 h4! h6

Black cannot hold on for long after 29 ... gxh4 30 Nh5 Qe7 31 Qh6 f6 32 Nxf6+ Kh8 33 Nd5.

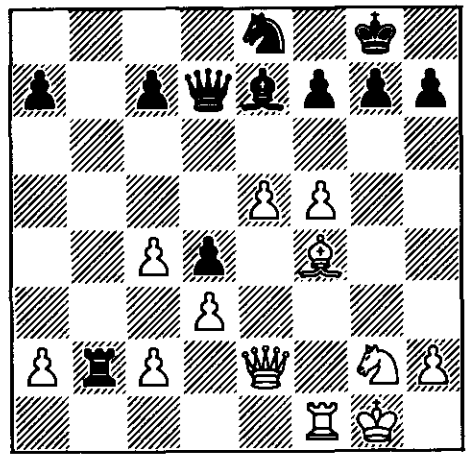
30 Nh5 Qd8 31 f6



"Hammering in the nail" after which Black can quietly lay down his arms, since now nothing can come to the aid of the king which finds itself completely isolated.

31 ... Kh7 32 hxg5 Bg4 33 Ng7 Kg6 34 Bd1 Qd7 35 Nf5 Bxf5 36 exf5+ 1:0

Before concentrating attention on such an active operation as a pawn storm, it is expedient to look at a broader plan of activity of the phalanx, made up of the e and f-pawns, since the e-pawn finds itself on an open file.



Here we have a position from **Rubinstein-Marshall**, Lodz 1908. White's phalanx is ready for a decisive break e6 or f6. Events developed like this:

27 Bg3 Qa4

Of course it is dangerous to lose time on taking the pawn. However, the attack on the c2 pawn is already to a certain extent a counterattack, but what else can he do to counter White's threatening phalanx? 27 ... f6 is unsatisfactory in view of 28 e6 Qc6 29 Qh5 Rxc2 30 Ne1 or 29 ... Bc5 30 Qf7+ Kh8 31 e7 h6 32 Nf4 Rxc2 33 Bf2.

28 Rf2 Rb1+ 29 Rf1 Rb2

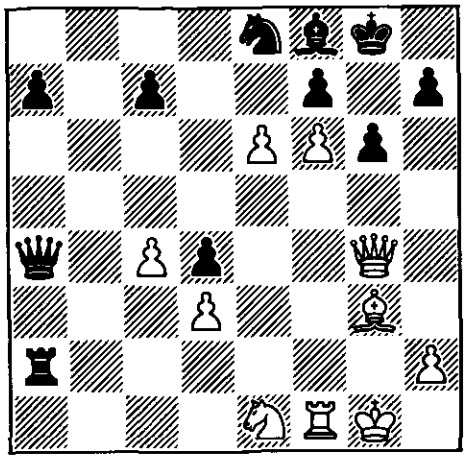
No better is 29 ... Rxf1+ 30

Kxf1 Qxa2 31 Nf4.

30 f6! Rxc2

On 30 ... gxf6 could follow 31 Qg4+ Kh8 32 Qxd4 Qxc2 33 Ne1 Qd2 34 Qd7.

31 Qg4 Bf8 32 e6 g6 33 Ne1 Rxa2



The phalanx has broken through to the sixth rank and demolished all obstacles in its path.

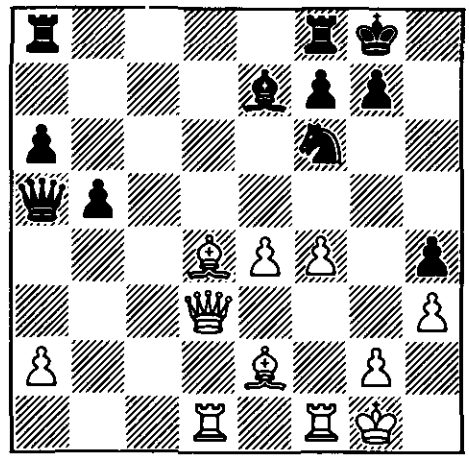
34 exf7+ Kxf7 35 Nf3 Nxf6 36 Ng5+ Kg7 37 Rxf6

It is possible to win also in other ways, for example 37 Qe6 or 37 Be5.

37 ... Kxf6 38 Qf4+ Ke7 39 Qf7+ 1:0

A decisive storm of the opponent's position on the basis of a breakthrough of the pawn phalanx of e and f-pawns was also carried out by White in the game **Aronin-Flohr,** (18th USSR Championship 1954).

The phalanx is already deployed on the frontier, the crossing of which leads to a quick demolition of the opponent's castled position.



24 e5 Nd7 25 f5 Bc5

Black's aim is to blunt the sharp attacking march of the phalanx by exchanging queens. If, for example, 26 f6 then 26 ... Bxd4+ 27 Qxd4 Qb6 and the aim is achieved.

26 Bxc5 Nxc5 27 Qe3 Qb6

Once again soliciting an exchange.

28 Kh1 Rae8 29 f6

Threatening 30 fxg7 Kxg7 31 Rf6.

29 ... gxf6 30 Qh6 Ne4 31 Rf4 Rxe5 32 Rxh4 1:0

The following encounter between Chigorin and Zukertort played in the international tournament at London 1883 should be considered the original game in which the strength of the pawn phalanx on the e and f-files was classically demonstrated. Admittedly, even five years before this, against Bird at the Paris tournament of 1878, Zukertort succeeded in bringing to light, in a comparatively simple form, the activity of such a phalanx.

Spanish Game
White: **Chigorin**
Black: **Zukertort**
(London 1883)

1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bb5 Nf6 4 0-0 Nxe4 5 d4 Be7 6 d5

The most difficult opening problems arise for Black after 6 Re1 Nd6 7 dxe5 Nxb5 8 a4.

6 ... Nd6! 7 Bxc6

On 7 Be2 follows 7 ... e4, while on 7 dxc6 Nxb5. The best continuation is 7 Nc3.

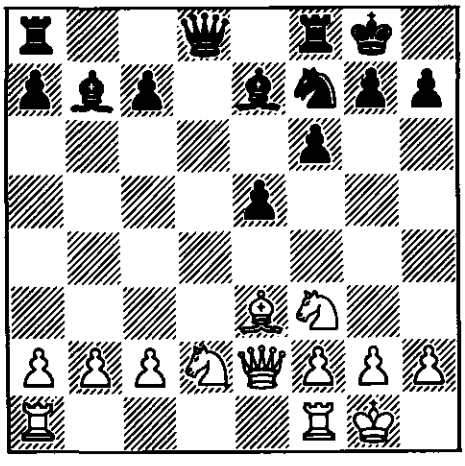
7 ... dxc6 8 dxc6 f6!

And in fact the phalanx is already mobilised. Very soon it begins its dangerous advance.

9 cxb7 Bxb7 10 Be3 0-0 11 Nbd2 Nf7!

Now, as the e5 pawn is reinforced, everything is ready for an advance of the phalanx, and it is not apparent how it can be successfully countered. All this is a result of White's 6th and 7th moves. Thus the outwardly imperceptible inaccuracies in the opening created a pre-requisite for a dangerous initiative for the opponent.

12 Qe2



12 ... f5 13 Nb3 f4 14 Bc5 e4 15 Nd4 f3!

The forcing four-move march of the pawn phalanx already yields its fruit. Now 16 gxf3 is bad in view of 16 ... Bxc5 17 Ne6 exf3 18 Qc4 Qf6 and Black remains with a material advantage, while the White king's position is totally exposed.

16 Qb5 Qc8!

With two threats - ... Qg4 and ... Ba6.

17 Rfd1

White defends himself subtlely. If 17 ... Qg4, then 18 g3 Qh3 19 Qf1.

17 ... Ba6

In order to deprive White of the possibility of the above-mentioned defence.

18 Qa4

Again parrying the threat of 18 ... Qg4, on which follows 19 ... Nxf3! However, the White king's position, shattered by the phalanx, is so unsatisfactory that it is easy for Black to find other ways to develop the attack.

18 ... Ng5 19 Nxf3

On 19 Bxe7 follows mate in a few moves: 19 ... Nh3+ 20 Kh1 fxg2+ etc.

19 ... exf3 20 Rd7

Also now, on 20 Bxe7, follows 20 ... Nh3+ 21 Kh1 fxg2+ 22 Kxg2 Qb7+ 23 Kxh3 Qf3+ 24 Kh4 Rf4+ with a quick mate.

20 ... fxg2 21 Rxe7 Nh3+ 22 Kxg2 Nf4+ 23 Kf3

Or 23 Kh1 Bb7+.

23 ... Qh3+

The whole of the final attack on the white squares and open lines has been conditioned by the route-march of the Black f-pawn: ... f5-f4-f3xg2. The White king, surrounded by enemy pieces in the centre of the board, cannot hold out for long.

24 Ke4 Bb7+

Another way of finishing the game was by 24 ... Bd3+ 25 Kd4 (25 cxd3 Qxd3+) 25 ... Rad8+ 26 Kc3 Bb5+ 27 Re3 Nd5+.

25 Kd4 Ne6+ 26 Kc4 Rf4+ 27 Nd4 Nxc5 28 Kxc5 Qh5+ 29 Kc4 Rxd4+ 0:1

In another classic game, the attack with the e-f pawn phalanx developed in a far more complicated situation, where a phalanx of "hanging pawns" in the centre was also operating for the opposing side, and for some time the struggle assumed a double-edged character.

Queen's Gambit
White: **A.Halprin**
Black: **H.Pillsbury**
(Vienna 1898)

1 d4 d5 2 Nf3 Nf6 3 e3 c5 4 b3 cxd4 4 exd4 Nc6 5 c4 Bg4 7 Be2 e6

Apparently the variation 7 ... dxc4 8 bxc4 Bxf3 9 Bxf3 Nxd4 10 Bxb7 Rb8 11 Bd5 e5 did not suit Pillsbury, though it seems to us that Black obtains a good game. However, instead of 11 Bd5, possible is the quiet 11 Bb2 or 11 Be3 which leads to an exchange (11 ... Rxb7 12 Qxd4) and some simplification of the struggle. Possibly it was precisely this which Pillsbury feared.

8 0-0 dxc4

A crucial decision. "Hanging" pawns are formed for White, with all the pluses and minuses of a central "hanging" phalanx. It is possible that this decision was dictated by an unwillingness to allow the move c5 with a subsequent advance of the column of White pawns on the queen's flank.

9 bxc4 Rc8 10 Bb2 Be7 11 Nbd2 0-0

Upon this, the opening stage is completed. White's plan must consist of the preparation of the advance of the "hanging" phalanx, in particular with the move d5. For this, he needs in the first place to bring his rooks to the centre by Rac1 and Rfd1. Pillsbury counters this plan with an attack on the king's flank, in conjunction with pressure on the opponent's "hanging" centre.

12 Qb3 Qc7 13 Rac1 Rfd8 14 Qe3

At least five considerations can be advanced in favour of this move: White defends the bishop e2 and thereby unpins the knight f3, he increases the pressure on the central point e5, defends the d4 pawn one more time, prevents the thrust ... Qf4, and finally takes the queen away from the threat of ... Na5. And yet the queen move

merits censure, above all because it does not represent a link in the execution of the plan, outlined above, of exploiting the favourable side on the "hanging" centre. It was necessary for White to play 14 Rfd1, with the aim of playing d5! and then try to carry out the manoeuvre Nf1-e3. In any case his task is to keep the opponent under threat of a pawn advance and thereby increase the tension in the centre as much as possible.

14 ... Bd6

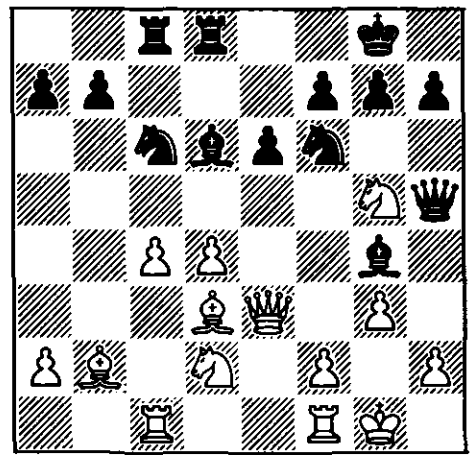
On top of everything it turns out that the position of the queen on e3 is rather bad. To prevent the threat of ... Bf4 he has to weaken the pawn cover of the castled position.

15 g3 Qa5 16 Bd3

A "trappy" move, reckoning on 16 ... Qxa2? 17 Bc3. It is true that White now threatens the break 17 d5 exd5 18 Bxf6 gxf6 19 Qh6, but this threat is parried by Black with advantage. Possibly it made sense to carry out this operation at once: 16 d5 exd5 17 Bxf6 gxf6 18 Qh6 and 18 ... Be7? is not possible in view of 19 Bd3. However, after 18 ... Bf5 19 Qxf6 Bg6 Black retains good chances: two strong bishops firmly defend his king, while the central position is more favourable for him.

16 ... Qh5 17 Ng5?

But this already is a mistake. White does not sense the impending danger; he should return with the bishop to e2 with a subsequent Rfd1.



17 ... e5!

This surprising blow in the centre is only possible because of White's last move. The aim of Black's advance is to gain the f3 square.

18 d5

Quite bad is 18 dxe5 Nxe5 19 Bxe5 Bxe5 20 Qxe5 Rxd3; both ... Rxd2 and ... h6, and ... Be2 with ... Ng4 to follow, are threatened.

18 ... Nd4

Black has allowed the advance of the enemy centre pawn, but has plenty of compensation in his invasion of the f3 point and likewise the possibility of advancing the e-f phalanx.

19 h4

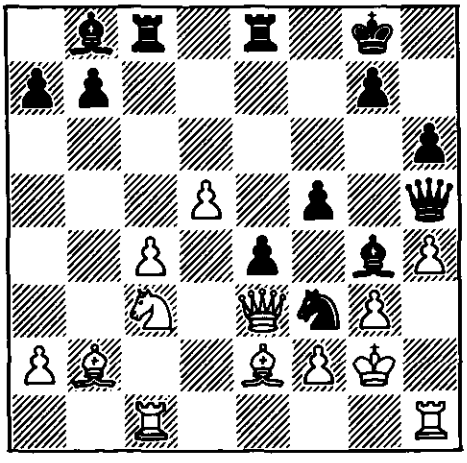
There is nothing better. 19 Bxd4 exd4 leads to the loss of the knight. 19 Nge4 Nxe4 20 Qxe4 Bf5 21 Qe2 Bxd3 22 Qxd3 Ne2+ - to the loss of the exchange. 19 f3 is also unsatisfactory in view of 19 ... Bc5!

19 ... h6 20 Nge4 Nxe4 21 Nxe4 Nf3+ 22 Kg2 Bb8 23 Rh1

So as to play 24 Be2, which was

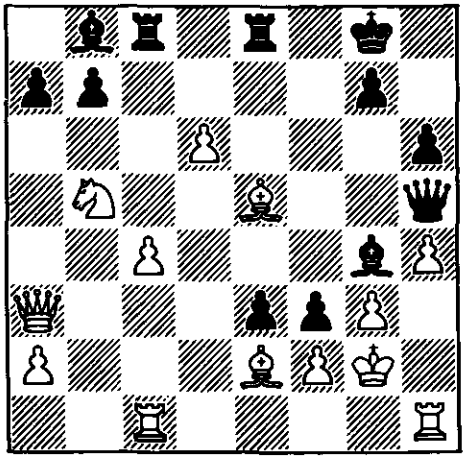
impossible at once because of 23 ... Nxh4+. However, Black utilizes this time to activate the phalanx. An immediate 23 Nc3 was comparatively best; however, also in this case Black could play 23 ... f5, threatening an attack with the phalanx.

23 ... f5 24 Nc3 e4 25 Be2 Re8



Soon there is a further advance of the phalanx, bringing with it "death and destruction". White makes an attempt to provoke some activity in the centre and even manages to advance the d-pawn, but this proves inadequate for countering Black's fierce attack.

26 Nb5 f4 27 Qa3 e3! 28 d6 Ne5 29 Bxe5 f3+



The culmination of the breakthrough.

30 Kh2 Rxe5

Possibly even more energetic is 30 ... Qxe5 and, if 31 d7, then 31 ... exf2!

31 Bd3 Bd7 32 fxe3 Qg4

Threatening mate in two moves. The f-pawn has turned into a "nail" which completes the rout.

33 Bf1 Rh5

Once again mate is threatened after ... Rxh4+.

34 Rc2 Rxb5

Black wins a piece. On 34 Qb2 would have followed 34 ... Bxb5 35 Bh3 Rxh4 36 gxh4 Bxd6 mate.

35 Rd2 Re5 36 Qb2 Rxe3 37 Qxb7 Bc6 38 Qb2 f2 0:1

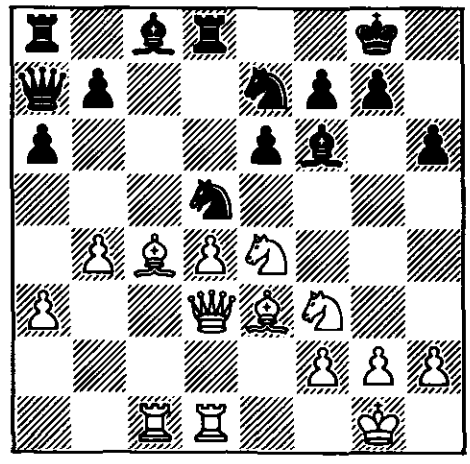
Usually the phalanx breaks through the front and only then do the pieces rush into the attack. In this game it was the other way around. The attack began with the pieces, but then they had need of the pawn phalanx.

The attack of a pawn mass on the flanks is figuratively called a storm, but it does actually warrant this name since it develops impetuously, by force, and in the intense heat of the struggle. With castling on opposite sides, at times both opponents rush into the storm and success usually attends the one who first achieves pawn escort and begins to loosen the position of the enemy king. Not infrequently the pawn storm takes place also upon same-side castling

or entirely without castling. In such cases the attacking side needs to watch closely for his own security, in voluntarily exposing his own king, and not allow the opponent to complicate the struggle by means of a counterattack.

The pawn storm column usually consists of three pawns, advancing side by side on the f, g, h or a, b, c files; there is also a two-pawn column. The pawn storm has more chances of success if the g or h pawns in the opponent's castled position have advanced. The contact of the storming column with such pawns takes place two tempi earlier than with pawns on their original squares, and as a consequence the general tempo of attack is apparently accelerated.

It is necessary to carefully calculate a pawn storm. However, this is a far from easy task. In the majority of cases a certain amount of risk is involved in the storm. Even when the pawn column achieves the aim and comes into contact with the opponent's pawns, one has to weigh up the character of the piece battle which must develop after the disappearance of pawns from the battle zone. It must not be forgotten that the advance of the pawn group creates various positional weaknesses in the rear, and if the storm does not succeed then things might surprisingly turn out to be "no better off than at the start". Let us give some illustrations.



In **Vidmar-Tarrasch** (Nürnberg 1906) White begins a pawn storm on the king's flank. The basis for this is the weakening of Black's castled position by the move ... h6 and the cramped position of his bishop on f6. He can do nothing in the centre and this makes the flank attack safe.

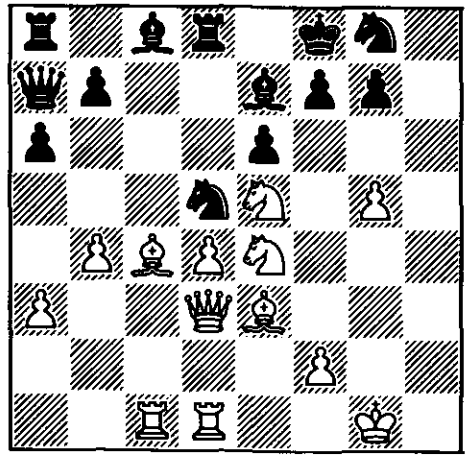
18 g4 Kf8

18 ... Nxe3 is inadequate in view of 19 Qxe3 when White threatens Nxf6+ followed by Qxh6. If 19 ... Kh7, then 20 h4.

19 h4 Ng8 20 g5

If Black's pawn were still on h7, this move would not have the same strength it acquires now.

20 ... hxg5 21 hxg5 Be7 22 Ne5



The storm yields its fruit. The Black king's position has appreciably deteriorated, his knight has been pushed back to g8 and does not have a single move, the f7 and g7 points are weak. White's pieces, on the other hand, are very actively placed, the open h-file can be occupied without difficulty, and also a concrete plan begins to show for the realisation of the positional advantage, for example Bd2 followed by Qf3.

22 ... f6

In the event of 22 ... g6 23 Bd2, the threat of Qf3 is irresistible. **23 Ng6+ Kf7 24 Nh8+ Ke8 25 Nc5 f5 26 Qe2 g6 27 Nxg6** and **Black** soon **resigned.**

Let us look at a few games. The peculiarity of the first of these lies in the fact that White begins a pawn storm on the king's flank even before Black has castled, almost in the opening stage, and in the present case, together with a particular aim - to open the position of the king, it has also the object of preventing Black from castling on the king's side. To place the king under frontal attack from the infantry would, on his part, be foolhardy.

Hungarian Defence
White: **A.Alekhine**
Black: **G.Breyer**
(Mannheim 1914)

1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bc4 Be7 4 d4 d6 5 Nc3 Bg4 6 h3 Bxf3

The aim of this exchanging operation, in conjunction with the following move, lies in the fact that it obliges White to close the centre. And, in fact, he has to "lock up" the centre without delay and set about enlivening the situation on the flank.

7 Qxf3 Nf6 8 d5 Nb8

Clearly, not 8 ... Nd4 9 Qd3 and then Be3 when the knight already needs to retreat, but has nowhere to go!

9 Be3 Nbd7 10 g4

As is seen from the further course of the game, this thrust introduces a general pawn storm on the king's flank.

10 ... Nf8 11 h4 Qd7

A dubious move. Black will now be very cramped, and the knight, from f6, has to go to g8, where it is both locked in itself, and also locks in the rook. He should play 11 ... N6d7, preparing a pawn storm on the queen's flank in the event of White's castling on that side.

12 Bb5 c6 13 Be2 Bd8

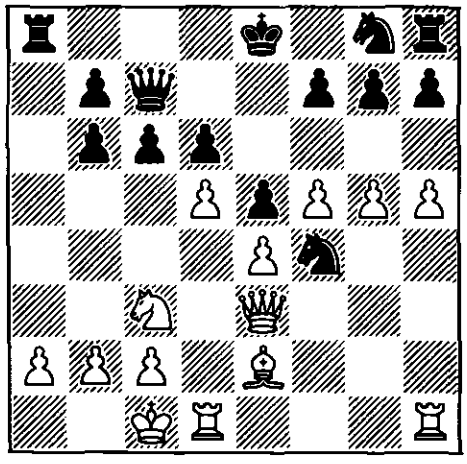
In the quest for operational space for his pieces. More unpleasant for White would be the reply 13 ... a6 with the threat ... c5 and a future enlivening of his pawns on the queen's flank. If 14 g5 Ng8 15 Na4, then already good is 15 ... Bd8, retaining the possibility of playing ... c5 and possibly also ... b5.

14 g5 Ng8 15 0-0-0 Bb6 16 Bxb6

White is carried away with the

storm and goes for the exchange, after which he succeeds in forcibly carrying out f4 and adding the f-pawn to the attacking column of the h and g-pawns.

16 ... axb6 17 Qe3 Qc7 18 f4 Ng6 19 f5 Nf4 20 h5



The storm is in full swing, but Black has managed to transfer one of his inactive knights to the weak f4 square, while he has in prospect the possibility of castling on the queen's side, that is to take his king out of the zone of attack. Perhaps he still need not despair!

20 ... h6

A sharp and risky attempt to counter the column storming its way to the king's position. A pawn battle now flares up at once. The position is so complicated and unusual that it is difficult to suggest any kind of clear defensive plan. Possibly 20 ... Nxe2+ 21 Qxe2 0-0-0 22 Rh3 Kb8 23 Qc4 (If 23 Rd3, then 23 ... Ne7, and then ... Nc8, and the b6 and d6 squares are reliably defended) 23 ... h6 24 dxc5 bxc5 25 gxh6 Rxh6 etc. White retains attacking possibilities by playing a further a4 and b4, but all the same there is quite a lot of potential resistance remaining for Black. Breyer, apparently, decides to keep a firm hold on his cavalry outpost. In this, clearly, lies the point of the text move.

21 f6 gxf6 22 g6 Kf8?

Without mentioning the fact that this move is a direct mistake (admittedly, not exploited by White), nothing can justify the journey of the king into the storm region. This may be courageous, but also reckless!

Black could not take the pawn twice: 22 ... fxg6 23 hxg6 Nxg6 in view of the pin 24 Bh5. Castling is also unfavourable - 22 ... 0-0-0 23 gxf7 Nxe2+ 24 Nxe2 Ne7 25 Rhf1 f5 26 dxc6 bxc6 27 exf5 Nd5 28 Qa3. However, by continuing 22 ... fxg6 23 hxg6 and only now 23 ... 0-0-0, Black, with an extra pawn, can rightfully look forward to the future with confidence. In any event, there would still be a very stubborn struggle in prospect.

23 gxf7

Carried away with his plan to expose the position of the enemy king, White does not notice a surprising new possibility which has presented itself - to win at least a knight by 23 g7+! Kxg7 24 Rhg1+ and the knight must cover, since 24 ... Kf8 (or 24 ... Kh7) would lead to an even more deplorable result after 25 Qg3.

Now Black takes heart and the struggle once again assumes a quite

fierce character.

23 ... Ne7 24 Bg4 cxd5 25 exd5 f5 26 Bf3 Qc5 27 Qe1 Kxf7

And so Black, as before, has an extra pawn, his pieces occupy good positions on the queen's flank, and he has two operation-files - "a" and "c". All would be well, if it were still possible ... to ensure the safety of his king, but it is just this which is difficult, and possibly even an insoluble problem. White's plan of attack consists of an exchange sacrifice on f4 and an invasion on the e-file.

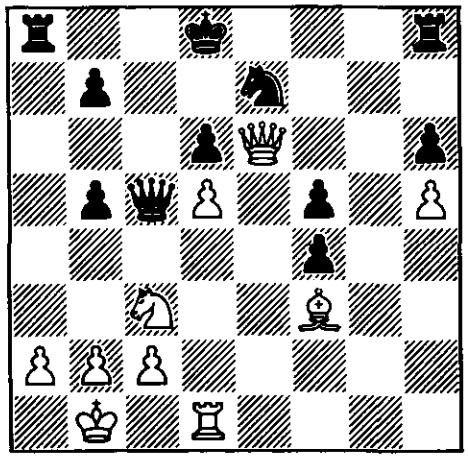
28 Rh4 Ke8 29 Kb1

So as, after 30 Rxf4 exf4, to not be threatened with an exchange of queens.

29 ... b5

He should play 29 ... Rh7 or 29 ... Rg8 (with the aim, after 30 Rxf4 exf4 31 Qe6, to have the move Rg1). Also 29 ... Rc8 is worthy of attention.

30 Rxf4 exf4 31 Qe6 Kd8



There is much that Black does not foresee, but even on the best defence, 31 ... Rc8, it would be difficult to save the game. Interesting variations are obtained: 31 ... Rc8 32 Be2 b4 33 Bb5+ Kf8 34 Qf6+ Kg8 35 Bd7 and wins, or 32 ... Rc7 33 Bxb5+ Kd8 34 Re1 Qb6 (34 ... Rh7 35 Qg8+) 35 a4 Qc5 36 Qf6 Rg8 37 Qf7 Rh8 38 Qg7 Rg8 39 Qxg8+ and Re8 mate.

32 Nxb5! Qxb5

Black is already a rook up, but not for long.

33 Qxd6+ Qd7

Or 33 ... Ke8 34 Re1 Qd7 35 Qg6+ Kd8 36 Qf6 Rg8 37 d6.

34 Qf6 Rh7 35 d6 Ke8 36 Re1 Ra6 37 Qg6+ Rf7 38 Bd5 Rxd6 39 Qxf7+ Kd8 40 Qf8+ Qe8 41 Qxe8+ Kxe8 42 Bxb7

The White pawns advance irrepressably. **Black resigned** on the 51st move.

Sicilian Defence
White: **G.Kasparyan**
Black: **G.Levenfish**
(10th USSR Championship 1937)

1 e4 c5 2 Ne2 Nc6 3 d4 cxd4 4 Nxd4 Nf6 5 Nc3 d6 6 Bg5 e6 7 Qd2 Be7 8 0-0-0 0-0

The opposite-side castling, characteristic for this variation of the Sicilian Defence, predetermines White's plan, which consists of the carrying out of a pawn storm on the king's flank. Not without foundation there is an opinion that there is no need for Black to hurry with the removal of his king to the flank, and in a number of games he carries out castling after a preliminary 8 ... Nxd4 9 Qxd4, and if 10 f4, then 10 ... Qa5. Admitted-

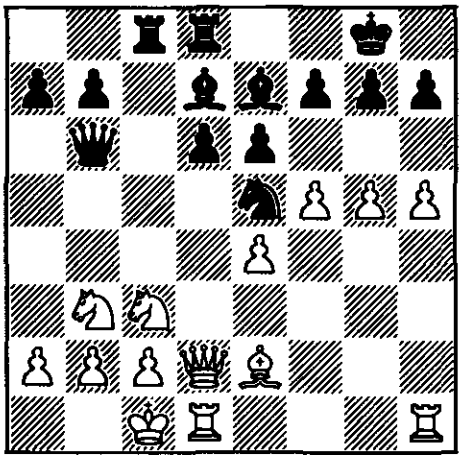
ly, also in this case prospects of a pawn attack on the king's position remain for White.

9 f4 Qa5

On 9 ... h6 White replies 10 h4. Deserving attention is 9 ... e5 - an idea advanced by Geller and successfully tested in several games - which has the aim of making it difficult for White to organise a storm.

The move in the game is not quite satisfactory. In any case, if such a development of the queen is planned then he should first of all exchange on d4.

10 Nb3 Qb6 11 Be2 Rd8 12 g4 Bd7 13 f5 Ne5 14 h4 Rac8 15 Bxf6 Bxf6 16 g5 Be7 17 h5



A colourful picture of a storm. Black is excellently mobilised, his knight is placed in the centre of the board on a weak square, both his rooks operate in the direction of the centre, one of them is located on the open c-file which leads straight to the haven of the enemy king. However, White is also attacking with his three-pawn storm-group, and this is his only, but very important, positional plus. With the next moves, his pawns enter into contact with the Black king's defensive cover, bring about necessary exchanges, and then White's piece army, in the first instance his queen and rook, begin to operate very powerfully against the breach which has been created on the file.

17 ... Bf8

Clearly, not 17 ... exf5 in view of 18 Nd5.

18 Rdf1 d5

Correct tactics! A flank attack is best met by an attack in the centre. Black sacrifices a pawn (19 fxe6 fxe6 20 exd5) but White does not consider accepting the "Greek" gift at the cost of giving up the storm and handing over the initiative to the opponent (20 ... Bb4).

19 g6 dxe4

Black consistently opens the centre, where all his pieces are operating. The variation 19 ... fxg6 20 hxg6 h6 21 Nxd5 exd5 22 Qxd5+ Be6! 23 Qxe6+ Qxe6 24 fxe6 relieves the crisis rather in White's favour (24 ... Nxg6 25 Rf7), though it was acceptable for Black.

20 gxh7+ Kh8 21 f6 e3 22 Qe1

Worse is 22 fxg7+ Bxg7 and now 23 Qe1 is not possible because of 23 ... f5!. Now, however, he threatens to take on g7 and then play h6 and Qh4. The reply is therefore forced.

22 ... gxf6

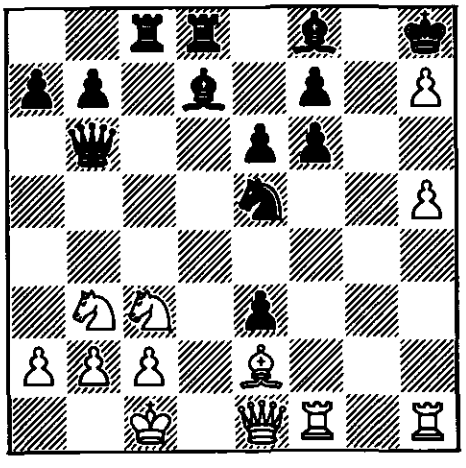
The storm yields its fruit - the

Black king's position is exposed. The main artery for a piece attack is the g-file and to a certain extent also the f-file.

Though Black has purposefully exploited the time which White has spent on the storm (he has opened and seized the centre and worsened the position of the enemy king), White's attack is nevertheless the more dangerous.

The tension has reached its height, a critical phase of the struggle approaches.

23 Rxf6



A pardonable error! In the chaos of events White does not find the best continuation of the attack. This was discovered by Kasparyan himself, who subjected the present position to a thorough analysis. He should play 23 Rhg1.

Some of the variations contained in Kasparyan's analysis are very beautiful, for example, 23 Rhg1 Kxh7 24 Qh4 Be7 25 Qe4+ Kh8 26 Qf4 Kh7 27 Qxe5! fxe5 28 Rxf7+ Kh8 29 Bd3, or 23 ... f5 24 Qh4 Ng4 25 Rxg4! fxg4 26 Rxf7 Bg7 27 Rxg7! Kxg7 28 Qe7+ Kh6 29 Qf6+ Kxh5 (29 ... Kxh7 30 Qg6+ Kh8 31 Bd3) 30 Ne4 with the threats of Ng3 mate and Qg5 mate.

23 ... Be7 24 Qf1 Rf8

With the aim of preventing a sacrifice on f7.

25 Nd5 Qc6 26 Nxe3 Qe4 27 Rh3 Qxh7

Now the Black king is reliably defended, while many weaknesses have been exposed in White's position - a consequence of the failed pawn storm.

28 h6 Rg8 29 Bh5 Rg5 30 Bd1 Rcg8 31 Qf4 Bc6 32 Rh4

Possibly White wanted to prevent the move ... Qe4, but better was 32 Nd2 with the same aim. Unfortunately, the move chosen by Kasparyan leads to a quick denouement.

32 ... R8g6 33 Rf5?

He could save the exchange by 33 Rxg6 Nxg6 34 Qb8+.

33 ... Rxf5 34 Nxf5 Bg5 0:1

In conclusion we present a game illustrating an attack on the king's flank with pawns from his own castled position, involving the advance f4-f5 (... f5-f4) followed by g4, h4, g5 etc. The idea of this sort of storm stems from Chigorin who repeatedly carried it out in his opening system 1 e4 e6 2 Qe2, for example in the 4th game of the match with Tarrasch, in several match encounters with Schiffers and others.

King's Indian Defence
White: **S.Flohr**
Black: **A.Vajda**
(Moscow-Budapest match 1949)
1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 d6 3 Nc3 Nbd7 4 e4 e5 5 Nf3 g6 6 Be2 Bg7 7 0-0 0-0 8 d5

The construction of the wedge predetermines the whole character of the future struggle, which must develop on opposite flanks. Black intends to play ... f5, and on this basis develop a frontal pawn storm; White plans an attack on the queen's flank.

8 ... Nc5 9 Nd2 a5 10 Qc2 Bg4 11 Nb3 Bxe2 12 Qxe2

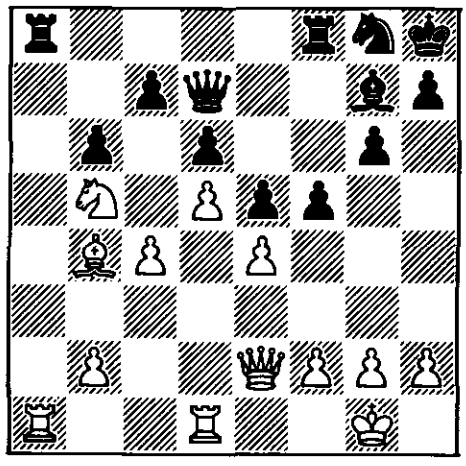
The exchange of the queen's bishop is favourable for White, since his "wedge" rules over the white squares. The absence of a white-squared bishop for the opponent not only increases his supremecy, but also makes it difficult for Black to carry out a storm in which the white square g4 can be called the critical height of the attacking position.

12 ... Nxb3

Of course Black is bound to be overcome in the battle for the c5 square. A well-planned move, preparing ... f5 and making activity difficult for White on the queen's flank, was 12 ... Nfd7.

13 axb3 Qd7 14 Rd1 b6 15 Bd2 Kh8 16 Nb5 Ng8 17 b4 axb4 18 Bxb4 f5

And so Black commences an attack, but also White obtains a dangerous initiative on the other flank.



19 f3 Nf6 20 Bd2 f4

The die is cast. The advance of the h and g-pawns will inevitably follow this pawn.

21 Qf1!

This modest retreat with the queen on one flank will secure control of an open line on the other.

21 ... g5

Just as one would expect!

22 Rxa8 Rxa8 23 Ra1 Rxa1 24 Qxa1 Qc8

He cannot allow the White queen into a8. On 24 ... g4, for example, follows 25 Qa8+ Ne8? (25 ... Qe8 26 Nxc7) 26 Nxc7 and wins.

25 Qa7 Ne8 26 b4 Bf8

As if preventing the break c5, which actually is dangerous.

27 Bc3

An unsuccessful attempt to renew the threat (c5), which Black, making another very useful move, now prevents once and for all. Meanwhile it is entirely unnecessary to prepare the move 27 c5. We take a look at how events

would develop in this case: 27 ... dxc5 28 Qa1! Bd6 (28 ... Bg7 29 bxc5 bxc5 30 Bc3 Qd7 31 Na7 Qd6 32 Nc6, and the e5 pawn perishes all the same) 31 bxc5 Bxc5+ 32 Kf1 Bd6 32 Bc3, winning the e5 pawn and obtaining a clear positional advantage.

After failing to exploit this moment, White already proves unable to strengthen his position on the queen's flank, whereas after the forced pause the opponent's pawns on the king's flank once again threaten to make themselves felt.

27 ... Qd7! 28 Be1

He should think about neutralising the threatening pawn charge and play 28 g4; if 28 ... fxg4, then 29 hxg3 Qh3 30 Be1 g4 31 Qa3. It is difficult to say which side has the advantage here. There are weaknesses for both sides in the position, for Black in the first place the c7 point, for White - e4 (after 31 ... gxf3).

28 ... Kg8 29 h3

Or 29 Bf2 g4 30 Bxb6 gxf3 and he cannot take on f3 due to 31 ... Qg7+ and then ... cxb6.

29 ... h5

The storm is in full swing, the crossing of the frontier by ... g4 is unstoppable.

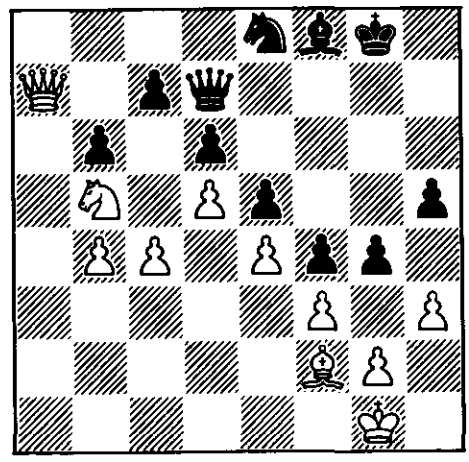
30 Bf2

(see diagram top of next column)

Threatening Bxb6.

30 ... g4!

This storming move turns out to be possible and highly unpleasant for White. If now 31 Bxb6, then



31 ... gxf3 32 Nxc7 Qg7 33 g4 hxg4 (33 ... fxg3 is also good) 34 Nxe8 Qg6 35 Nf6+ Qxf6 36 hxg4 Qh4 37 Qa2 Qe1+ 38 Kh2 Qxe4.

31 hxg4 hxg4 32 Kf1?

It was necessary to play 32 Bxb6 gxf3 33 Ba5! in order to make way for the queen to f2. However, Black also retains the better chances here, for example 33 ... fxg2 34 Qf2 Be7 35 Qxg2+ Kf7, White's bishop on a5 is badly placed; Black threatens to activate his game after ... Bh4-g3.

32 ... Qh7!

The strongest continuation of the attack! Qh1+ is threatened, which follows (only without check) also on 33 Ke2. The defence 33 Bg1 is better than the others, but also insufficient. Then 33 ... gxf3 34 gxf3 Qh1 35 Qa3 Nf6 and if 36 Nxc7, then 36 ... Qh3+ followed by ... Nxe4.

33 Qa3 Nf6 34 Ke2 Qh1!

The tempting 34 ... Nxe4 would justify itself only in the event of the sacrifice being accepted. However, White would have replied

35 Qd3 and after 35 ... Nxf2 36 Qxh7+ Kxh7 37 Kxf2 g3+ 38 Ke2 Kg6 39 Nxc7 Be7 40 Nb5 Kf5 41 Nc3 followed by Ne4 would probably even win the game.

35 fxg4 Nxe4 36 Qh3 Qb1

Threatens mate in three moves.

37 Be1 Qc2+ 38 Kf1 Qxc4+ 39 Kg1 Qxb5 40 Qh5 Bg7 41 Qf5 Qxd5 0:1

After all three Black pawns on the king's flank went into action, White's defence became difficult.

With this we conclude our look at the theme about pawns as an attacking force. It remains to note that, despite the extensive amount of material presented in this chapter and partly also in other sections of the book, the question about the active role of pawns in no way can be considered as exhausted. We came across it once again in the final chapters and particularly in the second part of the work, where we give special consideration to the combinational role of pawns.

Chapter Six

The Struggle with Heavy Pieces

In the introduction we have already pointed out the presence of a highly significant difference between the middlegame and endgame stages. The transition into the endgame to a considerable extent changes both the whole thematic struggle, which means also the planning of it, and methods of operation. It is very important to mention that in the endgame the evaluation of weak and strong points is changed and also the significance of open lines, the role of theory and technique increases, and particular requirements for handling pawns arise.

In this connection the question inevitably arises: to what extent in the central stage of the game is it necessary to be guided by considerations coming out of the possibility of transferring the struggle to the endgame? You see the game of chess presents itself as a single whole and, despite the significant difference in the positional requirements of the middlegame and endgame, never should it be forgotten that in many cases even the most sharp and tense struggle in the middlegame receives its completion deep in the endgame.

It is possible to reply to this question in a general way, that, taking into account the possibility of the future endgame, one should not exaggerate its role and so much the more attach decisive importance to the solving of the creative problems of the middlegame and even some openings.

Let us say there is no need to worsen one's pawn formation in vain, since this might have an unfavourable effect in the endgame. But if a concrete plan of action, intended in the middlegame, requires the creation of backward, doubled, isolated and even a formation of pawns, then it is necessary to go in for this by discarding abstract considerations, relevent only to the endgame.

It is well-known, for example, that Lasker, by choosing the exchange variation of the Spanish Game as White (1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bb5 a6 4 Bxc6), was planning, after 4 ... dxc6, to exploit the extra pawn on the king's flank in the endgame. He carried out this plan with success in match games against Janowski and Tarrasch. This did not prevent Lasker, in the international tournament at Nürnberg 1896, finishing off Tarrasch in the same variation even before the transfer of the game into an ending. A still more striking example

was the game Lasker-Capablanca (Petersburg 1914). Capablanca, familiar with Lasker's planned line to the endgame, in the exchange variation, blockaded the e-pawn and planned an attack on it with the rooks on the open e-file together with support from the bishop on b7. The struggle developed in the middlegame, in which Lasker did not stop at the advance f5, as a result of which the e4 pawn became backward and weak. At the decisive moment of the struggle he sacrificed this pawn, to invade with the knight on the sixth rank and the rooks on the seventh, and literally smashed his dangerous opponent. In conceiving the idea of attack, Lasker assessed his prospects finely and deeply and disregarded considerations about a possible endgame.

In short, if it is possible to combine the positional requirements of the middlegame and endgame - so much the better. But if they clash, then preference must be given to the requirements of the middlegame.

These questions arise in a particularly sharp fashion in positions where only queens and rooks on each side take part in the struggle (obviously, besides the pawns). The feature of this sort of middlegame position consists of the fact that the exchange of one of the pieces leads to an endgame - a queen or a rook. Here, calculation of the endgame situation becomes one of the most important factors for assessment.

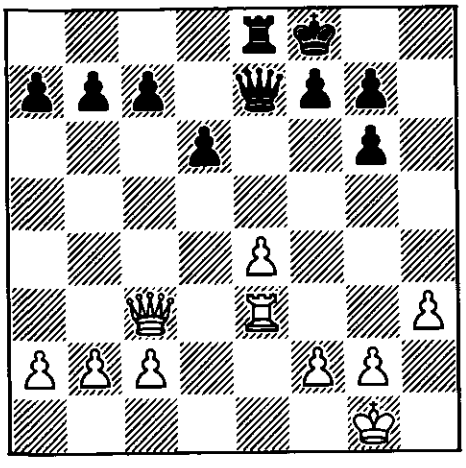
In chess literature the opinion is expressed that it is necessary to treat positions with heavy piece material as an endgame. This is a profound error.

A characteristic feature of the concluding stage of the game is the full right of the king to take part in the struggle. The king in the endgame is an active piece, which frequently decides the outcome of the battle. Meanwhile, in the presence of the queen and rook, the king is obliged to seek shelter behind pawn cover, and forgetting this truth prompted by the mistaken notion that the struggle has proceeded to the endgame, might end and actually does end in a very sad way.

At the same time the king must be ready to rush immediately into battle the moment the queens are exchanged and a rook ending ensues. On the other hand, in positions where an exchange of one of the heavy pieces leads to the endgame phase, great attention has to be paid to the pawn formation, to see that it is as comfortable as possible for the end-stage. The presence of passed pawns is of particular significance. Often this advantage acquires a decisive character. You see it is necessary to bring to a halt the advance of a passed pawn, in the present case the role of a blockading piece is not appropriate for the king, while

to waste the energy of a queen or rook on the blockade of a pawn means conceding an advantage in force to the opponent for the rest of the struggle.

The features of the struggle, inherent in this individual phase of the middlegame, also make up the contents of the present chapter.



Here we have a position from the 5th match game **Schlechter-Lasker** (1910).

Can it be contended that either one of the sides has the advantage? Of course not. More than this, many chessplayers would shake hands and go away peacefully.

On the board we are on the verge of an endgame, but this verge will last for many moves and will not be crossed.

22 Qb4 c6 23 Qa3 a6

In such positions, the loss of a pawn is tantamount to defeat; on the other hand the weakening of the b6 point plays no role at all.

24 Qb3 Rd8 25 c4

He is not afraid of weakening the d4 point, which could prove dangerous if minor pieces were taking part in the struggle. However, for an endgame position, the pawn is better left on c2. The weakness of the Black pawn on d6 is imaginary.

25 ... Rd7 26 Qd1 Qe5 27 Qg4 Ke8

Lasker carefully, via the rear of communications, brings his king nearer to the centre and the queen's flank. For the endgame, the king of course is best situated alongside his main group of pawns, which is the only place where it can assume an offensive. Black thereby begins to carry out a plan of enlivening the play on the queen's flank. At the same time a particular problem is also solved - transfer of the function of defence of the d6 pawn to the king, which frees the queen from this role. The king is clearly more securely placed on g8 or f8 than on c7, but even here it is difficult to get near it, There are not many pieces on the board, while Black's pawn chain on the queen's flank is quite solid.

28 Qe2 Kd8 29 Qd2 Kc7 30 a3 Re7 31 b4

White has ventured a sort of pawn storm, intending to create some threats to the Black king. Passive play is not to Lasker's taste and he boldly accepts the challenge.

31 ... b5!

Possibly a little risky, but a move which is full of initiative that poses White a serious problem. Black strives for a position in which an

exchange of queens will be favourable for him. This allows him to achieve great freedom of activity in so far as White has to avoid the endgame. The negative side to the move is the rather weakened pawn cover of his king. Meanwhile it is still a long way to the endgame, indeed will he even succeed in achieving it.

32 cxb5

Obviously Schlechter intended proving to his mighty opponent that on the board the middlegame still rules. However, White also must be wary. In view of the weakness of the a3 pawn and the possibility of the break ... c5, the rook ending is totally unacceptable for him. Besides this, the minus of the move h3, made earlier instead of g3, becomes clear. Because of this natural and, on the face of it, best continuation, 32 Qd3 proves to be impossible in view of 32 ... Qa1+ 33 Kh2 Qa2! 34 c5 dxc5 35 bxc5 Rd7 36 Qc3 Qd2! 37 Qe5+ Kb7, and the extra pawn on the queen's flank and control of the d-file gives White real chances of victory.

32 ... axb5 33 g3

With the aim of avoiding variations, analogous to that cited in the previous note, and likewise guaranteeing a post nearer to the centre for the king. Now, however, the h3 pawn is weakened. It is interesting that Schlechter, a brilliant representative of the Vienna school, in the creative work of which the exploitation of positional weaknesses was achieved with filigree technique, nevertheless decides on this.

33 ... g5 34 Kg2 Re8

Now the rook can be transferred in the shortest time for play on both flanks. It also prepares a demonstration against the h3 pawn. The position is appreciably sharpened.

35 Qd1!

White likewise exploits his chance excellently. He prepares the move a4, as a result of which the position of the enemy king becomes even more uneasy. 35 Qa2, with the same aim, was worse in view of the reply 35 ... Qe6.

35 ... f6!

A fine reply to White's threat. In the event of 36 a4 could follow 36 ... bxa4 37 Qxa4 Kb7 38 Ra3 Qxe4+ 39 Kh2 Qd4! 40 Qa6+ Kc7 41 Qa7+ Qxa7 42 Rxa7+ Kb6. Now Lasker's move is clear: the f-pawn is removed from attack. And after 43 Rxg7 Re4 Black must win the endgame.

36 Qb3

Schlechter does not fall into the finely woven spider's web, recognising that his chances can only be in the middlegame.

36 ... Qe6 37 Qd1

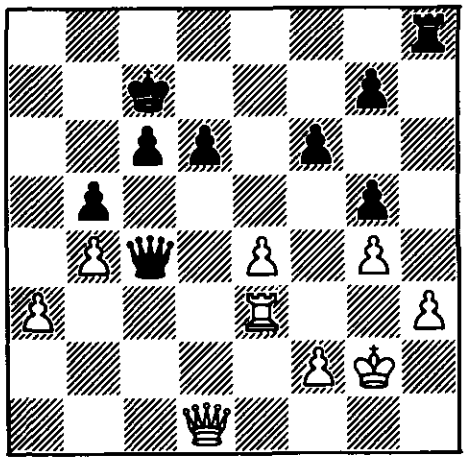
It seems that Schlechter consiously provokes his opponent in all the future play, in which he counts on finding a convenient moment for a4.

37 ... Rh8 38 g4

White goes in for a new weakening of the position, refraining from 38 Qg4, and he is absolutely right. Anything but an endgame!

38 ... Qc4

A presumptuous invasion of the queen. Undoubtedly he should continue 38 ... Ra8, in order to radically do away with White's main and perhaps only chance, consisting of the advance of the a-pawn. It is possible that Lasker, not seeing a clear way to further strengthen his position, in his turn decides to provoke Schlechter into the following bayonet attack, placing his hopes on the fact that this is associated with material sacrifices.



39 a4!

White might not get another opportunity. Soon Black will be convinced that it is not so easy to defend his king even against the comparatively small numbers of attacking forces.

39 ... Qxb4

No worse is 39 ... Ra8 40 axb5 Qxb5 41 Qb3 Ra1! 42 Rd3 Kb6 and if 43 Rxd6 then 43 ... Qf1+ 44 Kg3 Qg1+ and wins. However, Lasker is in a hurry to make material gains, the more so that there are no apparent immediate dangers for the king.

40 axb5 Qxb5

And so Black has won a pawn. But has White anything in return and in general? Undoubtedly yes. The enemy king's pawn cover is loosened still further, files are opened which are aimed directly at its position. White threatens to take the initiative.

41 Rb3 Qa6 42 Qd4

With the aim of playing Qb4, and then Ra3.

42 ... Re8

Black introduces the rook into the defence via the e5 square.

43 Rb1 Re5 44 Qb4 Qb5

On 44 ... Rb5 follows 45 Qc4.

45 Qe1 Qd3 46 Rb4

Not only defending, but also threatening the strong attacking move Qa1. Here real threats to the king also emerge for White.

46 ... c5

Black himself exposes still further the position of his own king, obviously confident that he has reliable defensive resources and wishing to realise his material advantage more quickly. The move 46 ... Rb5 is repulsed by the reply 47 Ra4 and if 47 ... Rb1 then 48 Qa5+ Kd7 49 Qf5+.

Commentators of this difficult game considered the best defence to be 46 ... Ra5 with the threat ... Ra3. However, the queen ending

obtained after 47 Rb3 Qxb3 48 Qxa5+ Kb7 49 Qd8 Qe6 50 f3 d5 51 exd5 cxd5 52 Qa5 Qd7 53 Qb4+ Kc7 54 Qd4 is not entirely simple and it is not clear whether Black can win it.

Lasker certainly was not confident about this, and, since he generally under-estimated his opponent's chances, he decided that he had a right to achieve more.

47 Ra4 c4

Who would not be tempted here to win the e4 pawn as well? White's position looks completely hopeless.

48 Qa1 Qxe4+ 49 Kh2 Rb5 50 Qa2

White threatens both Rxc4+ and Ra7+ followed by Rxg7. This guarantees him at least a draw.

50 ... Qe5+ 51 Kg1 Qe1+ 52 Kh2

52 Kg2 is better; later White has to lose a tempo.

52 ... d5

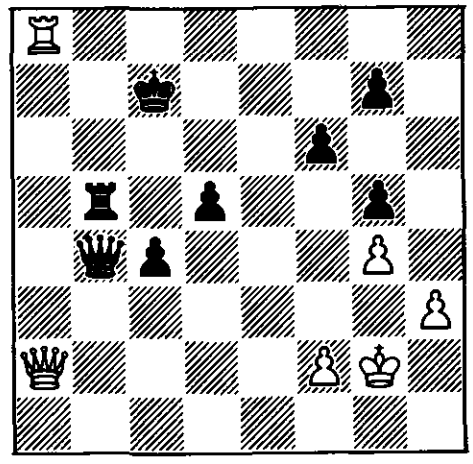
The idea of Black's check is to avert the check with the queen on a5 after 53 Ra7+ Rb7. However, his king is totally exposed and this gives Schlechter the chance to set the opponent new problems. It is difficult to defend such a king in the middlegame.

53 Ra8

With the threat Qa7+.

53 ... Qb4 54 Kg2

If the king were already standing on g2, White could have played 54 Qa6, which is now impossible in view of 54 ... Qd6+.



54 ... Qc5?

The failure of the general offensive in the centre, fatigue from the opponent's never-ending threats - all this, apparently, served as a reason for Lasker's making a mistake. However, the Black king has fallen into such a dangerous position that a draw was already the best way out of the position for him. For this he should play 54 ... Rb7 or 54 ... Rb8.

55 Qa6 Rb8

Also 55 ... Rb7 56 Qe6 does not save him.

56 Ra7+ Kd8 57 Rxg7 Qb6 58 Qa3 Kc8

Or 58 ... Qb4 59 Qa7.

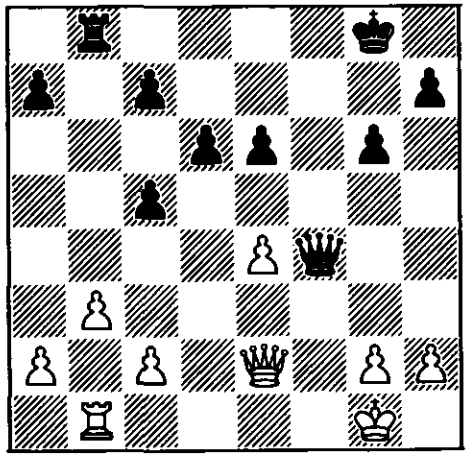
In making his last move, **Lasker** at the same time **resigned**, without waiting for mate after 59 Qf8+ Qd8 60 Qc5+.

The whole ending serves as an instructive example of the underestimation of middlegame ideas in the struggle with heavy pieces. Strictly speaking, Lasker made only one, but nevertheless a principal mistake. He yielded too much to the mercy of endgame

ideas.

This example reveals sufficiently clearly the peculiarities and difficulties associated with defence and attack in the struggle of heavy pieces. The following ending perhaps even more distinctly illustrates these features and difficulties, and likewise the character of mistakes made in such positions even by masters of the highest class.

The game **Lasker-Pillsbury**, played in the international tournament at Hastings 1895, reached the diagrammed position



White's central pawns are isolated and weak, his king is in need of defence. Black already has an extra pawn, the exchange of any of the pieces makes it easier for him to realise his material advantage in the endgame: in short, he has every chance of victory. This is how both partners assessed the state of affairs during the game.

Admittedly a dynamic assessment of the position points to a certain weakness of the Black a7 and c7 pawns, but the need for White to defend his king and e4 pawn makes it difficult to exploit the minuses in the opponent's pawn skeleton.

Let us look at how further events developed in this difficult position.

22 Rf1 Qe5 23 Qa6!

The leap of a wounded tiger! It is reminiscent of the "desperate" play of Schlechter in the previous game. White has nothing to lose and he bravely goes in for an exchange of his central pawn for the flank one of his opponent. On 23 Qf3, which, possibly, would be preferred by other chessplayers, could follow 23 ... Qd4+ 24 Kh1 Qg7 with the threat of exchanges on the f-file.

23 ... Qd4+ 24 Kh1 Qxe4

Pillsbury under-estimates the opponent's counterchances connected with the passed pawn obtained on the a-file. However, the specific character of play with heavy pieces is such that the presence of such a pawn considerably broadens the possibilities of the side possessing it. Thus, for example, the queen ending will be acceptable for White, while in some cases, if Black does not manage to blockade the passed pawn in time with the king, even the rook ending. Therefore Pillsbury should prefer 24 ... c4 after which both 25 Qxc4 Qxc4 26 bxc4 Rb2 and 25 bxc4 Qf2! 26 Rg1 Qb6 27 Qa4 Rf8 28 Qd7 e5 are in Black's favour. He apparently feared another con-

tinuation, namely 25 Qc6 Rf8! 26 Rxf8+ Kxf8 27 h3 cxb3 28 axb3 Qc5 29 Qd7 Qxc2 30 Qxe6 Qc1+ 31 Kh2 Qf4+ 32 Kh1 Qf7 or 30 Qxh7 Qxe4 31 Qxc7 Qe1+ 32 Kh2 Qe5+ 33 Kh1 a5. Actually, in both cases, lofty technique would be required to win, but victory would undoubtedly have been achieved.

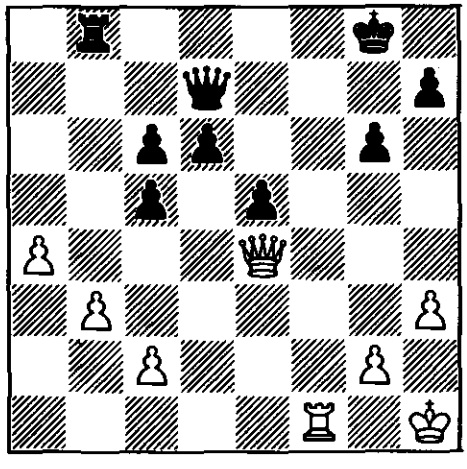
25 Qxa7 Qb7 26 Qa4 c6

The invasion of the queen on d7 was threatened. The insufficiently secure position of the Black king begins to tell.

27 Qe4 Qd7 28 a4

The significance of the extra pawn has been appreciably neutralised.

28 ... e5 29 h3



29 ... Rb4?

This move bears witness to the fact that Pillsbury did not try to understand sufficiently deeply the situation which has arisen. By removing the rook from the back rank, he dooms the queen to the role of watchman for the passed pawn. Meanwhile, in the forthcoming struggle, the energy of the queen is needed for the fulfilment of another task. It is therefore no surprise that soon Black not only proves to be powerless to realise his advantage but also a real threat of defeat hangs over him. The rook move also has another shady side - it worsens the position of the Black king, with which the rook now loses contact. In making his aggressive thrust, Pillsbury obviously counted on enlivening the passed e-pawn and, by threatening to advance it, to avert or to some extent weaken the offensive power of the enemy passed pawn. However, very soon it becomes clear that this plan is mistaken and that the passed a-pawn in the present situation is more advanced and dangerous than the e-pawn. Pillsbury's idea proves to be insufficiently concrete, he cannot foresee, with necessary distinctness, a way of leading to the achievement of the planned objective.

Up to this fatal last move, Pillsbury could still nourish some hopes of realising his material advantage. It was necessary to reinforce the e-pawn from behind, by playing 29 ... Re8. After the possible 30 a5 d5 31 Qe2 e4 32 Ra1 Qg7! 33 Ra2 e3 34 a6 Qe5 35 a7 Ra8 the chances would still be on Black's side. Even after making a mistake, Pillsbury ought to have immediately corrected it by returning with the rook to b8. Wishing to be consistent, from now on he goes downhill; an interesting chess

episode from the psychological point of view.

30 Qe1 e4 31 a5 d5 32 a6 Qe7?

White threatened 33 Qf2 and, if 33 ... Qe7, then 34 a7; in short, storm clouds hang over Black's position. Therefore 32 ... Rb8 was obligatory, after which he could still fight on, but already only for a draw. This is achieved by 33 Qg3 Ra8 34 Ra1 Ra7! 35 Qb8+ Kg7 and there is nothing better for White than to force a draw by 36 Qe5+ Kg8 37 Qb8+, since the continuation 37 Rf1 leads to nothing for him because of 37 ... Qe7.

33 Qg3!

The winning move. White has deprived the Black rook of the possibility of returning to the eighth rank, and the a-pawn in the end completes its victorious march.

33 ... e3 34 Ra1

The White passed pawn achieves its objective first: 34 ... e2 35 a7. The ill-fated rook on b4 is out of play. On 34 ... Qa7 White simply captures the e3 pawn.

34 ...Qf6 35 Re1

Also 35 Ra2 was sufficient for a win, but he would have to reckon on play with four queens on the board. This is how the finale might be in this case: 35 ... Qf1+ 36 Kh2 e2 37 a7 e1Q 38 a8Q Kg7 39 Ra7+ Kh6 40 Rxh7+ Kxh7 41 Qgc7+ Kh6 42 Qh8+ Kg5 43 Qcd8+ Kf4 44 Qh6+ and Black is mated. It is interesting that this was the only way to win after 35 Ra2. Lasker prefers not to tempt fate, which so surprisingly has smiled on him.

35 ... d4

Or 35 ... Re4 36 a7 Re8 37 Rxe3 Rc8 38 Qb8 Qf8 39 Qb7 Qf1+ 40 Kh2 Qf4+ 41 Rg3 Qf8 42 Rf3 Qe8 43 Re3! and wins.

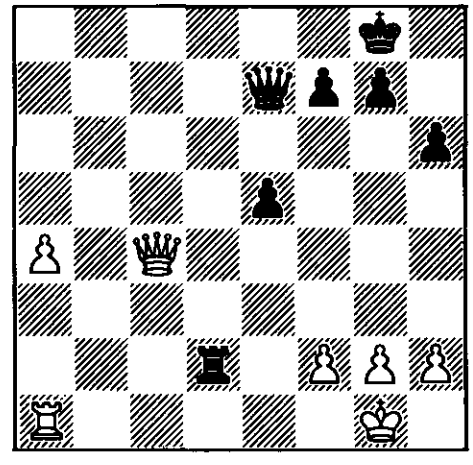
36 a7 Qd8 37 Ra1 Qa8 38 Qd6 Rb7

If 38 ... e2, then 39 Qe6+; on 38 ... Rb5 follows 39 Ra6.

39 Qxc6 e2 40 Qxb7 1:0

Since on 40 ... e1Q+ White plays simply 41 Rxe1.

The struggle proved to be very instructive in the ending of the 15th game of the return match **Euwe-Alekhine** (1937).



White has a passed pawn, indeed one which is furthermore defended from behind. In the rook and queen endings this guarantees him an indisputable positional advantage. However, with queen and rook on the board, a number of other factors influence the assessment of the position. In the present case, for example, it is

necessary to pay attention to the strong position of the Black rook on the second rank, where it is far more actively placed than the White rook. A comparison of the positions of the kings likewise proves to be in Black's favour in view of the presence of the "vent" ... h6. He has a strong mobile pawn in the centre. White has a weak point on f2. In such a situation White's passed pawn on a4 might be converted from a strength into a weakness, and this is confirmed by the immediate course of events.

27 a5

An "obvious" move, apparently made in the firm conviction of the superiority of his position. But the fact of the matter is that with each step forward the passed pawn is only weakened, and it soon becomes very difficult to defend it. He should play 27 h3, creating a "vent" for the White king.

27 ... Qf6 28 Rf1

If 28 Qc5, then 28 ... e4 29 Rb1 Ra2, and the a-pawn is already doomed to destruction; also no good is 28 Qf1 e4 29 a6 Rxf2.

28 ... Qd8 29 a6

White still thinks that the chances are on his side, otherwise he would have played 29 Ra1, on which the best reply is 29 ... Qf6, again forcing 30 Rf1.

29 ... Rd4 30 Qa2 Rd5 31 Qc4 Ra5 32 Rb1

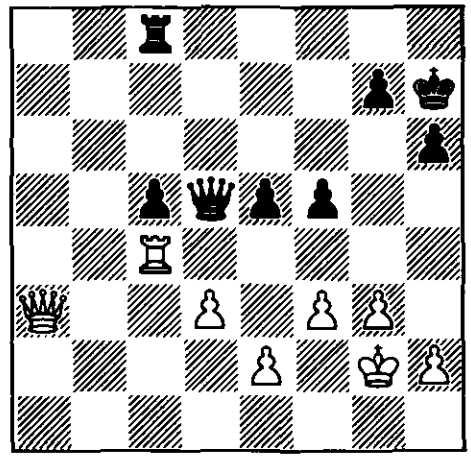
Now White loses his passed pawn without any compensation. 32 Qc6 was a more reliable continuation, not allowing the queen to a8. On 32 ... Qf6 might follow 33 Qa8+ Kh7 34 a7 Qa6 35 Qe4+ g6 36 h4 Qxa7 37 h5, and it is easy for White to achieve a draw by exposing the position of the Black king.

32 ... Qa8 33 Qc7 Qxa6

The further course of the struggle deviates from our theme - the game in the end finished in a draw.

The conclusion is clear: upon a struggle of heavy pieces there is possible such a combination of factors, particularly in association with the position of the king, which is capable of depreciating the role of even an extremely well-defended and far-advanced passed pawn. Those who are inclined to look at such a struggle as a process of the endgame are deeply and hopelessly mistaken.

In the diagram is shown a position reached in **Romanovsky-Stahlberg**, (Moscow 1935):



Despite the equality of forces and relative simplicity of the position, White has a basis for consid-

ering his position preferable. His pawns are more compactly placed, the Black c5 pawn is isolated and is an object for pressure. Nevertheless, White's chances of victory must be regarded as being minimal. There is no way for White to increase the attack on the c5 pawn, the number of operating forces on the board is very limited, the d3 pawn cannot go to the help of its pieces since the d4 square, where it might come into contact with the c5 pawn, is firmly blockaded. It is to White's advantage to force a rook ending in order to activate his king, but it is quite difficult to achieve this. However, generally speaking, his king is worse placed than the enemy king, which is reliably covered with pawns. And yet the initiative is undoubtedly in White's hands. Black is chained to passive defence and must watch closely in case the enemy attempts to display activity somewhere.

What should White's plan consist of? At the first stage his main task must be to drive away the enemy queen from the central d5 position and occupy the c4 square with his queen, where it will be far more actively placed. Upon this, White must be ready to exchange queens and thus to transfer the struggle into a rook endgame. In this connection he must create as favourable conditions as possible for such an endgame.

We look at White's future operations in more detail. Above all he must move his king up as close as possible to the centre, let us say to the f2 square, while in the rook endgame he will prepare the advance e3 followed by d4 with the rooks placed on the c-file. This leads to the win of the c5 pawn, providing of course, that the opponent himself does not succeed in bringing his king to the centre.

From this it is clear that White's task is far from easy, while, upon good defence by Black, possibly unrealisable. In any case, there is a sharp, tense struggle in prospect, sated with various interesting ideas.

36 Qc3 Rc6 37 Qc2 Kh8 38 Kf2

The advance of the king to the centre points to the fact that White is striving to transfer to the endgame. If, at this moment, the Black king cannot in good time support the engagement in the centre, then after the exchange of queens White would create an attack on the c5 pawn by one of two means: f4 and d4, or e3 and likewise d4.

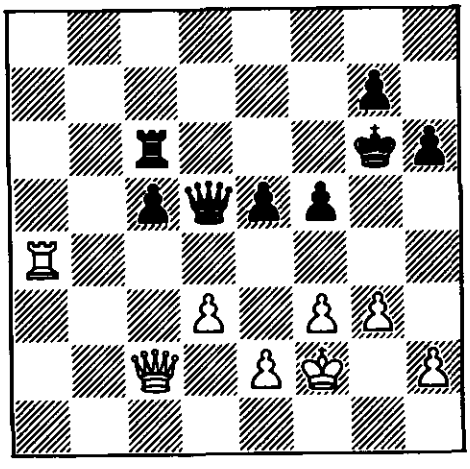
To a certain extent, these threats are also hanging with queens present, but the carrying out of them in the middlegame involves danger (as we have already had the opportunity of convincing ourselves in the model game Schlechter-Lasker) in view of the exposed position of his own king.

Consequently, Black must place his king in such a way that, in the

event of an endgame, it is able to quickly go over to the defence of the c5 pawn, while if it is attacked by the heavy pieces it can easily find shelter on the flank. From this point of view, the most convenient square was f7 and it was in fact necessary to direct the king here by playing now 38 ... Kg8. Black thought otherwise and, judging by the future development of events, less well.

38 ... Kh7 39 Ra4 Kg6

Even now 39 ... Kg8 was possible, reaching the c5 pawn in time with the king in the event of 40 Qc4 Qxc4 41 Rxc4 Kf7. The position of the Black king on g6 is not without danger, as White proves with his following moves.



40 e4

This storming thrust gains in strength with the position of the king on g6. In making this, White pursues three aims: to create another weakness for the opponent in the centre - an isolated pawn on e5; to create a handy piece base on the e4 square, which the king can also exploit in the event of an endgame ensuing; finally to generally open the position in the centre and bare the cover of the enemy king. Nevertheless the energetic advance of the White e-pawn sharpens the struggle for both sides - you see the position of his own king is exposed, the d3 pawn, located on an open file, becomes backward.

40 ... fxe4 41 Rxe4

Now, after Rc4, there is the threat of discovered check, while on 41 ... Kh7 surprisingly follows 42 Rxe5.

41 ... Kf7 42 Qc3 Re6 43 h4

Little by little, White prepares for the endgame. This move is made so that the h-pawn will not find itself under attack in the event of the exchange of queens and a check of the Black rook on the second rank. On the other hand, White wants to ascertain the position of the Black king: the move to f6 is unfavourable because of the reply f4, while the retreat to f8 means taking it away from the important central squares. In this way the advance of the h-pawn is, as it were, a useful waiting move.

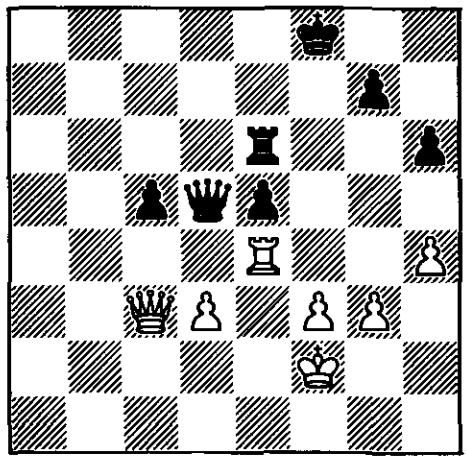
43 ... Kf8

43 ... Re7 would be more careful, on which White would have replied 44 h5, improving still further the conditions of the future endgame.

(see diagram top of next page)

44 Qc4

Offering the exchange which was prompted by Black's last move.



The less forcing 44 h5 was also possible, so as to delay the crisis and leave the opponent for a while under the pressure of a psychological "press".

44 ... Qd6

It is not so easy to say whether refusing to exchange is the right decision. Black, undoubtedly, has the basis to reckon on exploiting the open position of the White king, but on the other hand he has to endure the tension of a difficult defence, since the position of his own king is also not without danger.

Besides the chosen continuation, Black had the choice between 44 ... Rd6 and 44 ... Qxc4. In the first case would have followed simply 45 Ke3! and unfavourable are both 45 ... Ke7, in view of 46 f4, and 45 ... Kf7, owing to 46 Rxe5. On 44 ... Qxc4 the play could turn out in the following way: 45 Rxc4 Rc6 46 Ke3 Ke7 47 Ke4 Ke6 48 h5 Rc8 49 Ra4, and upon the best reply, in our opinion, 49 ... Rd8, Black has good chances of a draw since the pawn endgame after 50 Ra6+ Rd6 or 50 Ra7 Rd4+ 51 Ke3 Rd7 must finish in a draw.

However, also upon the continuation chosen by Stahlberg, Black ought not lose. Consequently he cannot be blamed for refusing to exchange.

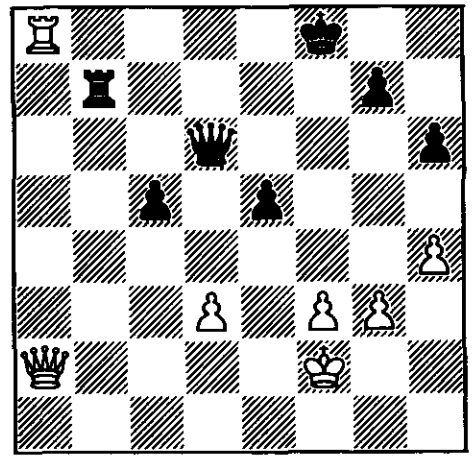
45 Qa2

With the driving back of the opponent's queen from its strong position, White can consider the first stage of his plan fulfilled. In the second stage he intends to attack the king.

45 ... Re7 46 Ra4 Rb7!

A strong reply. Black organises a counter-attack on the enemy king. Also possible was 46 ... Qxd3, on which would have followed 47 Ra8+ Re8 48 Rxe8+ Kxe8 49 Qg8+ Kd7 50 Qxg7+ Kc8 51 Qh8+ Kd7 52 Qxe5 c4 53 Qe3 Qe2+ 54 Ke1 c3 55 Qe2, and, by continuing 55 ... Qb2 or 55 ... Qg6, Black must achieve a draw.

47 Ra8+



47 ... Rb8

Black puts too much trust in generally accepted notions and

thinks that he will achieve a draw without difficulty in the endgame. A sad tribute to routine! He had a draw at hand. For this he should play 47 ... Ke7 and if 48 Qg8, on which White reckoned, then 48 ... Rb2+ 49 Ke1 Rb1+ 50 Kd2 Rd1+! 51 Kxd1 Qxd3+ 52 Kc1 Qc3+ 53 Kb1 Qd3+ 54 Kb2 Qd2+ 55 Kb3 Qd3+ 56 Ka4 Qd4+ 57 Ka5 Qd2+ 58 Ka6 Qd6+ 59 Kb5 Qd7+! 60 Kxc5 Qd4+ 61 Kb5 Qd7+ or ... Qb2+. White's king does not find shelter - Black needs only to choose those checks which cannot be covered by the queen, and this can be easily done.

In this way, Stahlberg could force a draw. Nevertheless the loss of the game for him is the natural result, since his decisive mistake is not a chance oversight or an unfortunate coincidence, but an incorrect understanding of the conditions of the heavy piece struggle. Stahlberg distrustfully draws the White king to an open position, and too trustily - to an endgame with equal material. However, to a certain extent, the same should be said also for White's play, which in this game was nevertheless attended by some good fortune.

48 Rxb8+ Qxb8 49 Qd5

And so a queen endgame with limited and equal material is obtained. Nevertheless, here the chances are on White's side due to his better placed king and queen and the weakness of the e5 and c5 pawns. However, his king is exposed, there are few forces left on the board, therefore Black has a right to hope for a successful defence.

49 ... Qb2+ 50 Ke3 Qc1+ 51 Ke2 Qc2+ 52 Ke3 Qc1+ 53 Ke4 Qe1+ 54 Kf5 Qxg3 55 Qxc5+ Kg8 56 Qc4+ Kh8

56 ... Kh7 is better.

57 Qg4 Qe1?

A fatal mistake. Black could still count on a draw by playing 57 ... Qf2 and, if 58 Kxe5, then 58 ... Qc5+ again with perpetual check. Sparing the pawn, he loses the king.

58 Kg6 Qc1 59 Qd7 Qg1+ 60 Kf7 Kh7 61 Qf5+ g6 62 Qd7 1:0

Before drawing conclusions let us look at one more game - this time fully, because in itself it seems to sum up our observations. In it nearly all the specific characteristics of interest to our theme are expressed, and the attack on an insufficiently secure king's position is particularly highlighted.

Queen's Gambit
White: **E.Bogolyubov**
Black: **A.Alekhine**
(1st Match Game 1934)

1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3 Nf3 Nf6 4 Nc3 c5 5 Bg5 cxd4 6 Nxd4 dxc4

The continuation 6 ... e5, which justifies itself in the event of 7 Ndb5 a6, prives to be not quite satisfactory in view of 7 Nf3 d4 8

Nd5 Nc6 9 e4, as occurred in the 29th (hors concours) game of the Euwe-Alekhine return match.

7 e3 Qb6

Alekhine refrains from the usual mode of development in the "improved" Tarrasch Defence, but the variant chosen by him is risky to say the least. Already Black's previous move was dubious, while the queen thrust is so unsatisfactory that it is even difficult to comment upon. Now White obtains an enormous advantage in development.

It would be useful to play 7 ... h6, followed by ... Be7 and ... 0-0.

One needs to look for the origin of moves, such as made by Alekhine, probably in his dislike of routine, in an endeavour to take the struggle away from the verge of excessive "correctness", and finally in enormous self-confidence.

8 Bxf6 gxf6 9 Bxc4 Bd7

The move 9 ... Qxb2 would be suicidal. The simplest way to refute it is by 10 Ndb5, but also good is 10 0-0, indicated by Levenfish, and, if 10 ... Qxc3?, then 11 Rc1 and he has to play ... Qxc1, since on 11 ... Qa3 follows 12 Bb5+ Bd7 13 Rc8+ with a quick win.

10 0-0 Nc6 11 Bb3 Be7 12 Rc1 Rd8

12 ... 0-0-0 is worse, in view of 13 Qh5.

13 Nxc6 Bxc6 14 Qh5 Qc5

The only reasonably good reply. In the event of 14 ... Rg8 15 e4, White has two threats - Bxe6 and Qxh7.

15 Nd5 Qd6 16 Nxe7 Kxe7 17 Qa5 Rhg8 18 g3 Qb8 19 Ba4!

White hurries to exchange the last minor piece. His advantage assumes a bolder form with heavy pieces, due to the precarious position of the enemy king. The Black pawns, broken up into three groups, are also excellent objects for attack.

19 ... Rg5 20 Qc3 Bxa4 21 Qb4+ Qd6 22 Qxa4 Qb6

And so the struggle goes over to the heavy piece stage, with all six heavy pieces. As distinct from the examples which we have looked at, where each side fought with queen and rook, in the present case only an exchange of queens transfers the game into the ending.

We do not look at special positions of this sort, since in these the struggle of heavy pieces is not much different from the usual process of the middlegame and only to a small extent does it concern the considerations mentioned in the introduction to the present chapter.

23 Rc3 Rb5 24 Rfc1 Rd7

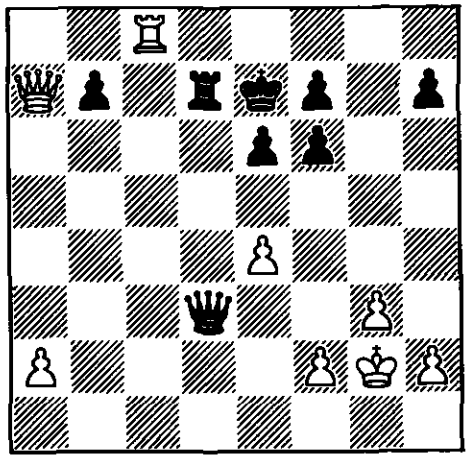
The king needs to be guarded. Thus, if 24 ... Rxb2?, then 25 Rc7+ Kf8 26 Qh4 Kg7 27 Qg4+ Kh8 (27 ... Kf8 28 Qh5) 28 Rxf7 and White wins.

25 Qa3+ Qd6 26 Qxa7 Rxb2 27 Rc8 Rd2 28 e4

With the aim of averting checks on the long diagonal after ... Rd1+. Now White threatens 29 Qa8 Rd8 30 R1c7+ Ke8 31

Rxd8+ Qxd8 32 Rc8. This forces Black to exchange rooks and transfer to a usual four-piece position. The reduction in forces must, in his opinion, weaken somewhat the opponent's onslaught.

28 ... Rd1+ 29 Rxd1 Qxd1+ 30 Kg2 Qd3



There is equal material on the board, but the Black king finds itself in a far more dangerous position than the enemy's. Therefore, as before, it is in White's interests to maintain the tension of the middlegame. However, Black, whose king is centralised, would prefer to play an endgame, even despite the weakness of the h7 pawn. This consideration is certain to leave an impression on the opponent's play.

31 Qc5+ Qd6

Not 31 ... Rd6, in view of 32 Qb4, defending and attacking.

32 Qc3 b5 33 Rc6 Qd4 34 Qc2 b4

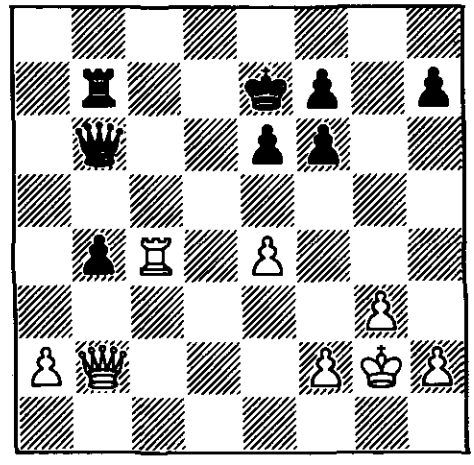
Black does not have a great choice of moves. His pieces occupy good defensive positions and it is hardly advisable to change these without being forced to do so. For example, on 34 ... Rb7, possible is 35 Rc8 with the threat of Qc6.

White's plan, or rather one of his tasks, will consist of attacking the b4 pawn in various ways with the aim of diverting the opponent's pieces from defence of the king.

35 Rc4

White likewise is limited in his search for ways to victory. The exchange of queens or rooks would most probably lead to a draw. It is likewise pointless for the rook to abandon the c-file, in view of the then possible Qc3. On 35 Rc8 he can quietly reply ... Rd8.

35 ... Qb6 36 Qb2 Rb7



The first part of White's plan is fulfilled. The Black pieces are diverted to the defence of the b4 pawn. Now follows an attack on the basic zone of the defence - the f7-f6-e6 pawn triangle. The third stage will be a piece attack on the king. A typical middlegame plan!

37 e5 fxe5 38 Qxe5 Qd6 39 Qg5+ Kd7

Willy-nilly the king is obliged to set off on a dangerous path.

40 Rf4 f5

Black has a difficult defence. In the event of 40 ... Kc6, it is possible to maintain the initiative by continuing 41 Qh4 or Qg4. And yet the move with the king gives Black more chances of a successful defence. With his last move he cuts down the communication of the queen with the king's flank, breaking the contact between the d5 and h5 squares, while this, in its turn, makes the White king's position calmer.

41 Kh3

White removes the king from a possible check on d5, but even stronger was 41 Qf6 with the threat of Rd4. The continuation 41 ... Qd5+ 42 Kh3 Qxa2 43 Rd4+ Kc6 44 Qd8 would give him a decisive attack. However, if 41 ... Kc6 at once, then 42 Rd4, and it is best for Black to submit to an endgame a pawn down after 42 ... Qe7.

41 ... Kc6 42 Qg8

There are no direct threats for White, but the attack in the rear, for example Qa8, indeed also the checks, promises him a lasting initiative.

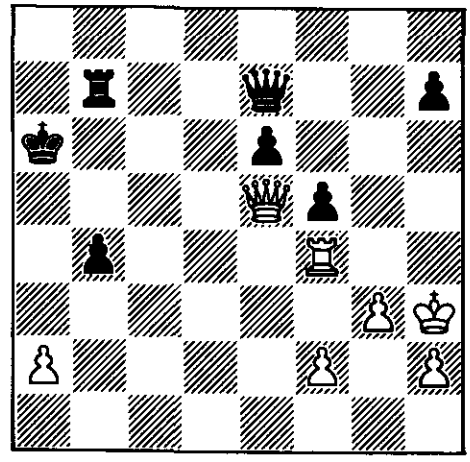
42 ... Kb5 43 Qe8+ Qd7

Also after 43 ... Kb6 44 Qa4, White's attack continues with unabated strength.

44 Qf8 Qe7 45 Qa8

With the threat 46 a3 bxa3 47 Ra4.

45 ... Ra7 46 Qb8+ Rb7 47 Qe5+ Ka6



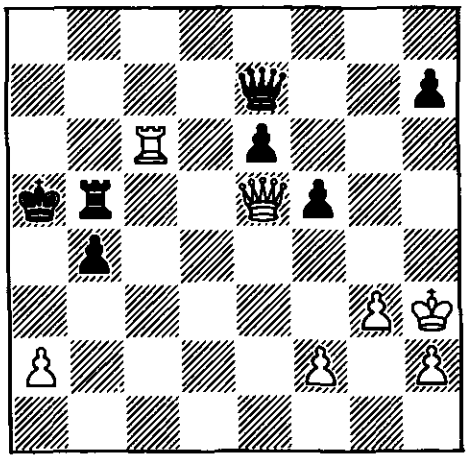
48 Rc4

Besides this, there was also another strong continuation for White. Analyses of many players, commenting upon this game in its day, showed that 48 a3 gave an irresistible attack here. In fact, with this move, White eliminates the last pawn cover of the enemy king and rids himself of his own weakness, which later on, in the endgame, is Black's main chance of a draw. The best defence was 48 ... Rb5 (48 ... bxa3 49 Ra4+ Kb6 50 Qa5+ Kc6 51 Rc4+ leads to a quick mate), but on this White has the strong reply 49 Qe2, forcing (in view of the threats a4 and axb4) the move 49 ... bxa3. However then 50 Ra4+ Kb6 51 Qe3+ Kc6 52 Ra6+ Kc7 53 Ra7+ (not so forcing, but sufficient, is also 53 Rxe6) 53 ... Rb7 54 Qe5+ Kc8 55 Ra8+ Kd7 56 Qd4+ Kc7 57 Qc4+ Kd7 (57 ... Kd6 58 Ra6+ Ke5 59 Qc3+ Kd5 60 Ra5+ Kd6 61 Ra4) 58 Qc8+ Kd6 59 Ra6+ Ke5 60 Qc3+ Kd5 61 Ra4 Qc5 62 Qf3 with decisive progress.

However, though White has

now missed the forced win, even upon the chosen continuation he retains a decisive initiative.

48 ... Rb5 49 Rc6+ Ka5



A propitious sacrifice of a pawn! The Black king has had a lot of trouble and dreams only about an endgame, even if it is with the inferior chances. On 49 ... Rb6 follows 50 Rc7 Qd6 51 Qe2+ Rb5 52 Qc2 Kb6 53 Rxh7 with an extra pawn in the middlegame.

50 Qxe6

Winning a pawn, but losing ... the middlegame. The endgame is not won as easily as it seems to White, since Black has good counterchances on the queen's flank.

Due to the bad position of the enemy king, White should continue the struggle under middlegame conditions. He is justly punished for changing this course.

And here is how the struggle could turn out after the strongest continuation of the attack - 50 Qh8:

a) 50 ... Ka4? 51 Ra6+ Ra5 52 Qc8 and wins.

b) 50 ... Rb7 51 Qd4 Qd7 52 Qc4 Rb5 53 Rc7 Qd6 54 Rxh7.

c) 50 ... Rb6 51 Qa8+ Kb5 52 a4+ bxa3 53 Rc3 Ra6 54 Qb8+ Ka5 (54 ... Ka4 55 Qb3+ Ka5 56 Rc4) 55 Qe5+ Kb4 (55 ... Kb6 56 Rb3+ Kc6 57 Qb5+) 56 Qd4+ Ka5 (56 ... Kb5 57 Rb3+ Kc6 58 Qc4+ or 57 ... Ka5 58 Qe5+) 57 Rc5+ Kb6 58 Rc1+ Ka5 59 Qe5+ Kb4(b6) 60 Rb1+ and Black has to resign.

d) 50 ... Qb7 51 Rc8 Ka4 52 Ra8+ Ra5 53 Qe8+ Qb5 54 Rxa5+ Kxa5 55 Qxe6; even stronger in this variation is 52 Qe8! Ka3 53 Qxe6 Qd5 54 Qe3+ with a great material and positional advantage to White.

50 ... Qxe6 51 Rxe6

And so it has come to an endgame where undoubtedly White has chances. From the point of view of our theme, the further course of the game ought not interest us. Nevertheless, to give a complete picture, we present the game in full, admittedly without special comments, so as to show how White was punished for deviating from the principal line in the struggle of heavy pieces.

51 ... Rd5 52 Re2 Rd6 53 f4 Rh6+ 54 Kg2 Kb5 55 h3 Rg6 56 Kf3 h5 57 Re5+ Kc4 58 Rxf5 Ra6 59 Rxh5 Rxa2 60 Rh8 b3 61 Rc8+ Kd4 62 Rd8+ Kc3 63 Rc8+ Kd3 64 Rd8+ Kc3 65 Rc8+

Here Alekhine requested that the game be declared drawn due to threefold repetition of position,

and the arbiter of the match mistakenly agreed to this. Bogolyubov raised an objection, but was unable to substantiate his objection because in time trouble the score of the game had been recorded inaccurately.

It remains for us to sum up a little. This amounts to the following: the struggle of heavy pieces of the type we have looked at is a process of the middlegame, and an attempt to include the king as an active piece in this struggle is just as risky as when it occurs in any middlegame; in addition to this, in the struggle of heavy pieces, several endgame factors (the role of the passed pawn etc.) increase in significance, while such operations as a pawn storm, various pawn formations in the centre and so on, on the other hand lose their effectiveness to a large extent; the struggle of heavy pieces is usually distinguished by great sharpness, in so far as it contains as much range of activity as is possible, and can quickly shift to any part of the board.

Chapter Seven

Manoeuvering. About the Initiative

In chess works and commentaries we quite often come across the term "manoeuvering". Following the example of the late grandmaster Tartakover, it is sometimes substituted for the concept of "tacking", though in the semantic sense both terms are not the same.

Manoeuvering is a term coming from the German word manöver, which means manoeuvre. However, one should not mix up the concepts of "manoeuvre" and "manoeuvering". Manoeuvre - this is several moves of one piece, usually made with some sort of concrete aim. Manoeuvering - is a series of manoeuvres with different pieces, bearing a more or less prolonged character and rarely having a clearly outlined aim.

Manoeuvering is a concept that arose in connection with a definite phenomenon on the horizons of chess art which appeared at the end of the last century and was provoked mainly by the advocating of dogmatism by a number of representatives of the English and German chess schools.

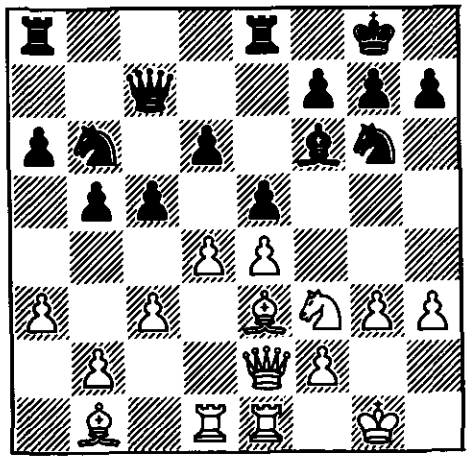
In a number of events, with these masters came to be recommended a form of waiting tactics. One of the partners, following this recommendation, waited until his opponent finally created a real weakness in his camp or made some other sort of mistake. It would also happen that both partners, having learned to be patient, began to manoeuvre by themselves in the rear of communications, following a policy of extreme caution and trying not to give each other even if only the slightest chance of attack.

This, of course, did not mean that all manoeuvering merited censure.

In manoeuvering one can perceive several gradations. Besides waiting, aimless manoeuvring, there is also forcing, planning manoeuvring. This takes place in those cases where the achievement of the intended aim requires prolonged piece and pawn manoeuvres. This aspect of manoeuvering is seen particularly often in positions of a closed type, that is with mutually locked pawn chains.

We also begin our review with positions of this sort - and playing them is difficult and requires a profound and penetrating assessment of positions from the chessplayer.

The next position arose in the game **Lasker-Burn**, played in the Petersburg tournament 1909:



Fearing his opponent's tactical chances, associated with the move ... d5, and intending, without hindrance, to unhurriedly prepare an attack on the king's flank, Lasker locked the position here with the move

22 d5

A more interesting and sharper struggle might have ensued with the tension-centre, but also in a closed position a plan will quite possibly present itself, with the only difference that the achievement of a concrete objective is then postponed until a more distant moment in the game. From now on the play forcibly assumes the form of protracted manoeuvering.

22 ... Nd7 23 Kg2 Qd8 24 h4 Be7!

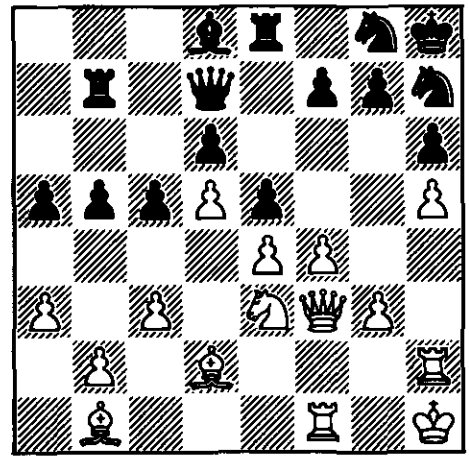
A cunning retreat, directed against the move 25 h5. White does not detect the fine point of the bishop manoeuvre.

25 h5

Now Black turns out to be master of the g5 square and this serves as a main obstacle in the development of White's offensive. The opponent is set a more difficult task by 25 Rh1, threatening, after h5, the manoeuvre Nh4-f5. The reply 25 ... h5 is unsatisfactory in view of 26 Nh2 Nf6 27 Bg5.

25 ... Ngf8 26 Rh1 h6 27 Rdg1 Nh7 28 Kf1 Kh8 29 Rh2 Rg8 30 Ne1 Rb8 31 Nc2 a5 32 Bd2 Bf6 33 f3 Nb6 34 Rf2 Nc8 35 Kg2 Qd7 36 Kh1 Ne7 37 Rh2 Rb7 38 Rf1 Re8 39 Ne3 Ng8 40 f4 Bd8 41 Qf3

The manoeuvering has already lasted 20 moves and both opponents have vigilantly held back their forces close to critical points of the board. White's offensive on the king's flank has been slowed down and only on the queen's flank does a possibility slightly appear, by playing Bc2 to then try and seize the white squares by c4.



41 ... c4?

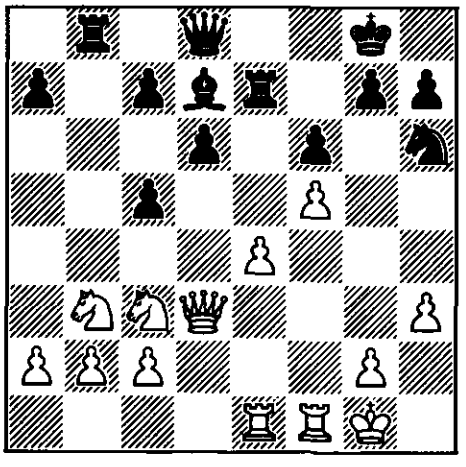
Foreseeing the above-mentioned possibility, Black prevents the advance of the White c-pawn, but overlooks the active move of another pawn. Also 41 ... a4 is not good because of 42 c4 and, if 42 ...

b4, then 43 axb4 cxb4 44 fxe5 Rxe5 45 Ng4 Re8 46 e5 with good chances for White. In all probability it was best to return with the bishop to f6.

42 a4

Now the game livens up and soon loses its manoeuvering character. The Black pawns on the queen's flank prove to be weak and this in the end decides the outcome of the game.

In the following example the author of the numerous piece manoeuvres is likewise Lasker.



The diagram illustrates a position from the game **Lasker-Salwe**, which was played in the same Petersburg tournament 1909.

The pawn chain here, as distinct from the previous example after the move d5, is not locked. There are also open lines and weak points present - in short, quite a lot of objects for planning. White has made territorial gains on the king's flank. Nevertheless in the course of the next 20 moves the opponents conduct the struggle on manoeuvering lines.

17 Nd5 Re8 18 c4 Nf7 19 Qc3

White defends the b2 pawn, so as to obtain the possibility of manoeuvering with the knight.

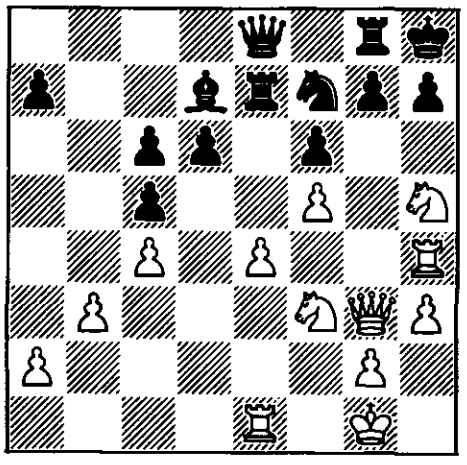
19 ... Re5 20 Nd2 c6 21 Nf4 Qb6 22 b3 Rbe8 23 Qg3

White now threatens Nh5, but Black "notices" the threat.

23 ... Kh8 24 Nh5 Rg8 25 Rf4 Qd8

Again White intends to attack the g7 and f6 pawns, by the move Rg4, but Black parries the threat without difficulty.

26 Nf3 Re7 27 Rh4 Qe8



White has a weak e4 pawn, and the need to defend this makes his manoeuvering efforts to pressurise the Black king's position not very effective. If now, for example, 28 Nf4 with the threat of mate in one move, then 28 ... Nh6 and Black is attacking the e4 pawn. Lasker's next move is surprising and above all deserves attention in respect of the assessment of it by the author himself.

28 Qf2

Lasker gave his reasons for the

retreat of the queen: "Black's position is cramped, but there are no combinations leading to a win to be seen. Therefore it is necessary to first try to disorganise Black's pieces by means of new attacks and then later return to the intended plan of attack."

What are the "new attacks" that Lasker intends? Black has a weak d6 pawn, defended only by the knight; possibly he intends to direct his gaze precisely here, but the attack on d6 is fully counterbalanced by Black's attack on the e4 pawn.

A new stage of manoeuvering begins, on the part of Lasker, who sets his distant aim on distracting some of Black's pieces from defence of the king's flank. He leaves the rook and both knights "on duty" in expectation of forthcoming events in this sector of the board, but the queen and other rook begin to manoeuvre in the central area.

28 ... Rf8 29 Qd2 Qb8 30 Kh1

The aim of this move remains unclear, but manoeuvering is like that and characteristically not a product of concrete ideas.

30 ... Rfe8 31 Rg4 Rg8

Not 31 ... Nh6 in view of 32 N or Rxg7. Also not good is 31 ... Ne5 32 Nxe5 dxe5; Black is left without both the e5 point and the e-file.

32 Rd1 Qb4

Black shows signs of nervousness. He should not sever the connection between the queen and the other forces and remove it from defence of the d6 pawn. By playing 32 ... Qe8, Black could maintain the "status quo". If 33 Qf4, then 33 ... Ne5 34 Rh4 Nf7 and it is difficult for White to increase his attack.

33 Qf2

Black's position proves to be surprisingly difficult. Bad is 33 ... Nh6 34 Rh4 with the threats of Nxf6 and Rxd6.

Meanwhile White threatens 34 Qh4 Nh6 35 Nxf6!. The return of the queen, 33 ... Qb8, does not prevent this.

33 ... Qc3

With the aim of defending the f6 point. However, now White's idea begins to justify itself.

Black's queen has managed to isolate itself from the rest of Black's army, but it is unworthy for such a powerful piece to take on the function of defending the f6 point.

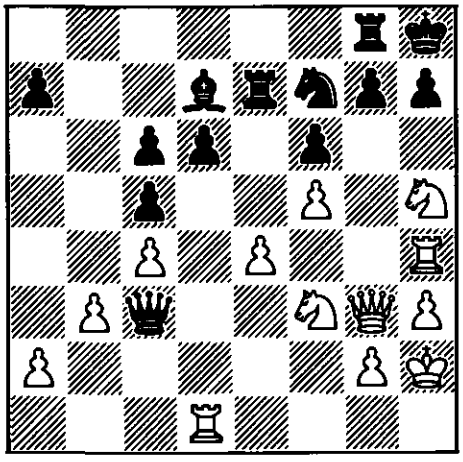
34 Qh4

With the threat of 35 Nf4 Nh6 36 Rxd6.

34 ... Nh6 35 Rf4 Nf7 36 Kh2 Rge8 37 Qg3 Rg8 38 Rh4

The most interesting moment - repeating the position already reached in the game after the 27th move, with the only difference that the White rook has shifted from e1 to d1, the king - from h1 to h2, and the Black queen is placed on c3 and not e8. This position is immeasurably better for

White. The threat Nf4 proves to be very dangerous and apparently irresistible. For example, 38 ... Ne5 39 Nf4 Nxf3+ 40 Qxf3 Qxf3 41 Ng6 mate or 39 ... Bc8 40 Rxh7+ and mate in two moves.



38 ... g5

The position is opened, the manoeuvering comes to an end.

39 fxg6 Rxg6 40 Qf2 f5 41 Nf4 Rf6 42 Ne2 Qb2 43 Rd2 Qa1 44 Ng3 Kg8 45 exf5 Bxf5 46 Nd4! cxd4 47 Nxf5 Kf8 48 Qxd4

White wins a pawn, with a good position, and with it the game.

In general, Lasker liked manoeuvering and seemed to think that he had no equal in this area. However, in the following game, he was put down with his own weapons.

Queen's Gambit
White: **Em.Lasker**
Black: **M.Chigorin**
(Hastings 1895)

1 d4 d5 2 Nf3 Bg4 3 c4 Bxf3 4 gxf3 Nc6 5 Nc3 e6 6 e3 Bb4 7 cxd5 Qxd5

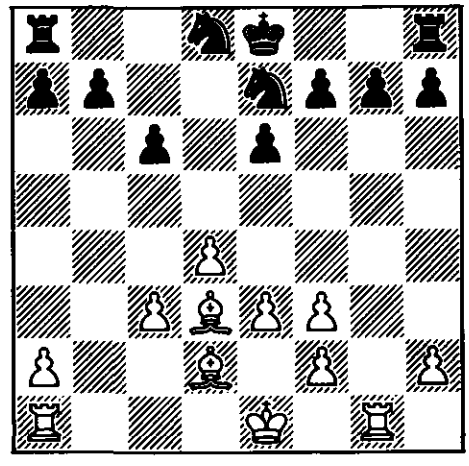
The game has developed in a rather sharp and tense way and it is difficult to imagine that five moves later it already enters the area of protracted manoeuvering.

8 Bd2 Bxc3 9 bxc3 Nge7 10 Rg1 Qh5 11 Qb3 Nd8 12 Qb5+

White forces the exchange of queens, so as to make it easier for himself to exploit the "power of the two bishops".

There are chessplayers (and at the time when the present game was played there were many of them amongst the strongest masters of the world) who see the possession of the two bishops as a particular aspect of a positional advantage. We set out our point of view on this question in the following chapter.

12 ... Qxb5 13 Bxb5+ c6 14 Bd3



From this moment, the struggle enters a prolonged period of manoeuvering, which will be continued almost to the very end of the encounter. The next pawn exchange follows only after 20 moves, while the next piece - after

a full 40 moves, being at the same time a manoeuvre which wins the game.

14 ... Ng6 15 f4 0-0 16 Ke2 Rc8 17 Rg3

White plans to double rooks on the g-file and then attack with h4. This looks quite threatening but is parried by comparatively simple means.

Regarding the manoeuvering of the partners in the present game, it bears a far more purposeful, planning character than in the previous examples.

17 ... c5 18 Rag1

Consistent (White now threatens to decide the game after 19 h4 or even stronger 19 f5 exf5 20 Bxf5 Rc7 21 h4) but ... ignoring the opponent's idea.

Better is at once 18 f5 exf5 19 Bxf5 Rc7 20 Rag1 cxd4 21 cxd4 Kh8. Though the threat of h4 is parried, the White pieces will be quite active in the roomy, opened position.

18 ... c4 19 Bc2 f5 20 Bc1 Rf7 21 Ba3 Rc6 22 Bc5 Ra6 23 a4 Nc6 24 Rb1 Rd7 25 Rgg1 Nge7 26 Rb2 Nd5 27 Kd2 Ra5 28 Rgb1 b6 29 Ba3 g6 30 Rb5 Ra6 31 Bc1 Nd8

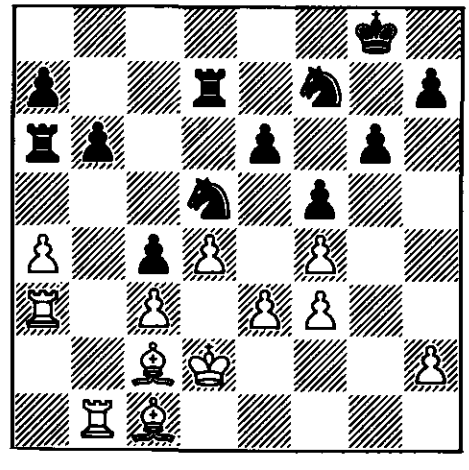
Though Black is forced into manoeuvering, this is far from being wait-and-see. He wants to provoke the move f3 through the threat of penetration with the knight on e4, and then to organise an attack on the enemy pawns in the centre.

32 Ra1 Nf7 33 Rbb1 Nd6

In his manoeuvering plan, Black undoubtedly is thinking about opening the g-file, for which he has at his disposal the move ... g5. He reserves this option until later, taking into account the isolated position of his rook on a6, which, after the opening of the position, will not easily find harmonious co-operation with the other pieces.

Nevertheless, Steinitz considered that the immediate 33 ... g5 34 fxg5 Nxg5 35 Ra3 Ne4+ 36 Bxe4 fxe4 followed by 37 ... Rg7 should lead to a winning attack. Later Levenfish was to point out that, instead of 35 Ra3, 35 Bb2 is bolder for White, but also in this case, after 35 ... Ne4+ 36 Bxe4 fxe4, Black's dominating knight obliges one to evaluate the position in his favour. Admittedly, his advantage would hardly be sufficient for victory. White could continue 37 Rg1+ Rg7 38 Rxg7+ Kxg7 39 Ke2, preparing f3. He will find quite good resources to stubbornly fight for a draw.

34 f3 Nf7 35 Ra3



Preparing against the move ... g5, White frees his king from defence of the c3 pawn.

35 ... g5

It is interesting that even after this move, which opens the position, manoeuvering prevails over the game for more than 20 moves.

Some commentators of this wonderfully creative game have expressed the opinion that Black should have preferred a waiting prophylactic line, striving to prevent the advance e4 and thereby limiting his immediate problems. Not to mention the fact that Chigorin was sickened by passive tactics, it is very doubtful whether Black could prevent the advance of the e-pawn. For example, 35 ... Nd6 36 Ke2 Rf7 37 Bd2 Kf8 38 Kf2 Ke7 39 Kg3 Nf6 40 Raa1, upon which White transfers one rook to f1, the other - to e1 and for all that carries out the break e4, but by now with three times the power.

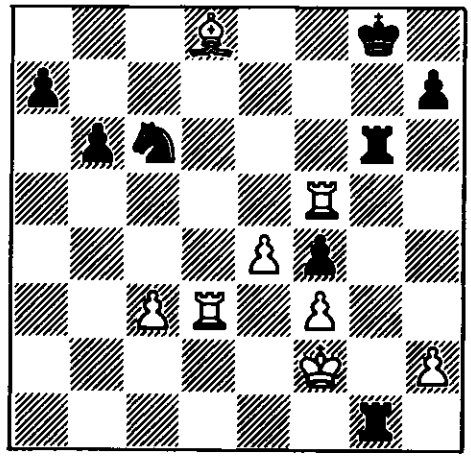
36 Ke2 gxf4 37 e4 Nf6 38 Bxf4 Nh5 39 Be3 f4 40 Bf2 Ra5 41 Rg1+ Kf8 42 Raa1 e5 43 Rab1 Ng7 44 Rb4 Rc7 45 Bb1 Ne6 46 Rd1 Ned8!

Black threatens to win a pawn by ... Nc6. 47 ... Ba2 does not help, in view of 47 ... Nc6, and, if 48 Rxc4, then 48 ... Nd6.

47 Rd2

White decides to give up a pawn, counting on opening the position and gaining space for his bishops to operate. Incidentally, in the first period of his creative work, Lasker was a great admirer of "the two bishops".

47 ... Nc6 48 Rb5 Rxa4 49 dxe5 Nfxe5 50 Bh4 Rg7 51 Kf2 Rg6 52 Rdd5 Ra1 53 Bd8 Nd3+ 54 Bxd3 cxd3 55 Rxd3 Rag1 56 Rf5+ Kg8



The planned manoeuvering has been completed with an economical mating position. On 57 Rxf4 follows 57 ... R6g2+ 58 Ke3 Re1 mate. Therefore he has to part with the bishop and after

57 Bg5 R6xg5 Lasker resigned.

The following game is also a brilliant illustration of 40 moves of purposeful planning.

English Opening
White: **A.Alekhine**
Black: **F.Yates**
(Semmering 1926)

1 c4 e5 2 Nc3 Nc6 3 Nf3 Nf6 4 d4 exd4 5 Nxd4 Bb4 6 Bg5 0-0

Black chooses an unfortunate moment to castle, as a result of which the pinned knight becomes the "Achilles Heel" of his position. Alekhine called castling a colour-

less continuation. He should play 6 ... h6 7 Bh4 Bxc3+ 8 bxc3 d6.

7 Rc1 Re8 8 e3 d6 9 Be2 Ne5

Also here 9 ... h6 might still be useful.

10 0-0 Bxc3 11 Rxc3 Ng6?

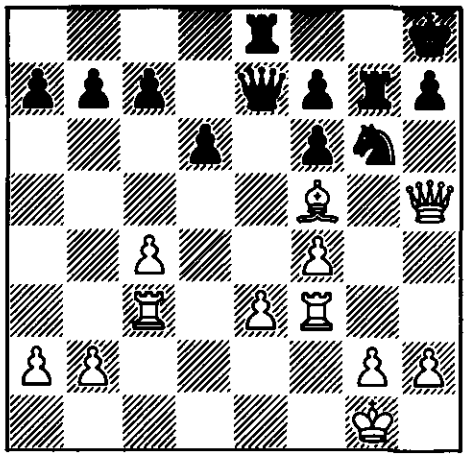
A slight mistake, which for Alekhine, however, proves to be sufficient to win the game.

11 ... h6 was also necessary now.

12 Nb5! Bd7

He cannot avoid doubled pawns on the f-file.

13 Bxf6 gxf6 14 Bd3 Kh8 15 Nd4 Rg8 16 Qh5 Qf8 17 f4 Re8 18 Rf3 Rg7 19 Nf5 Bxf5 20 Bxf5 Qe7



The Black king's position is seriously weakened, the f6, f7 and h7 pawns could become objects of attack. However, for this it is necessary to radically change the conditions of the struggle on the king's flank. The fact of the matter is that Black's weaknesses are for the present reliably defended, it is not easy to take control of the g and e-files; the position of the White king is also far from being perfect, and, if White, in the course of his attack, has to push the pawns on the king's flank, then all the pre-requisites are there for a counter-attack by the opponent.

In short, the advantage is on White's side, but to convert it into something real proves to be a complicated and difficult task. In fact, from the further course of the game it is seen that the plan contemplated by Alekhine represents a 40 move process of manoeuvering, in the course of which only one pawn exchange will be made. It is interesting that, in the final manoeuvering, White announces mate in six moves, with the same pieces present as when the process began.

White's plan consists of:
(1) the transfer of the king to a safe place on the queen's flank;
(2) the storming advance of the g-pawn; and
(3) piece manoeuvres with the aim of a harmonious concentration of all his forces and a directing of their co-ordinated blows on the f6 and h7 points.

It is perfectly clear that, with full equality of forces for the attacking and defending sides and a pawn chain position which is not locked, the fulfilment of such a manoeuvering plan looks like being an unusually complex matter.

21 Bc2 Reg8 22 g3 Qd7

Black manoeuvres without any particular aim. This is easy to

understand: there are no weak spots in the enemy position which might allow him to undertake an enterprising operation; at the same time, White's plan is still not clear, indeed he also still cannot create any dangerous threats. One can surmise that, at the present moment, Yates considered his position to be more than reliable.

23 Rf2 Qe7 24 Kf1

The king begins a distant journey, which is completed only after 15 moves.

24 ... Rd8 25 Rd2 b6 26 Qd5 Rgg8 27 Qf5 a5 28 Ke1 Qe6 29 Qh5 Qe7

Black considers that his position is solid and waits while White also convinces himself of this. Therefore his piece manoeuvres do not have any concrete formation, except one thing - they do not worsen his position.

This is the picture that emerges: White manoeuvres purposefully and according to plan, preparing a decisive attack on the king's flank while Black occupies himself for the time being with waiting manoeuvres. It is clear that creative technique, characterised by concrete ideas and purposefulness, must gain victory over passive waiting tactics.

30 Kd1 Rg7 31 Kc1 Nf8 32 Bf5 Re8 33 g4

Only after 12 moves is this pawn advanced to its appointed square - not until the White king is finally "established" in a safe little nook and his pieces are regrouped to extract as much as possible from the advance g4-g5. All this requires scrupulous, thorough work and, of course, patience.

Alekhine was a master of great creative dynamism, but dynamics combine badly with such slow manoeuvring. It is all the more interesting to observe that "pathos for patience" with which Alekhine, curbing his temperament and dynamism of thought, carries out the process of many moves of manoeuvring.

The piece manoeuvres are instructive and, in order to understand some of them, it is necessary to try to deeply grasp all the ramifications of White's plan. Here, for example, the manoeuvres of the bishop (beginning from the 21st move and going on until the end of the game): Bf5-c2-f5-c2-a4-d1-c2-f5. The bishop goes to the c3 and f5 squares three times and to the a4 and d1 squares once. This "running about" might show itself to be pointless and, of course, it does not prove decisive in White's manoeuvring, but it points to the fact that Alekhine, at this time, banished hurry, haste and striving to force the game from his creative methods and devices.

33 ... Ng6 34 a3 Qd8 35 Bc2 Qc8 36 Kb1 Ne7 37 h3 Ng6 38 Qh6 Qd8 39 Ka2 Ne7

So as to reply to 40 Qxf6? with 40 ... Nd5!

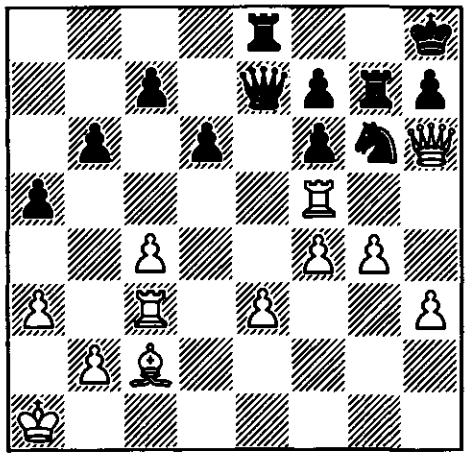
40 Ka1 Ng6 41 Ba4

An intermediate move, pursuing the aim of either breaking the harmonious co-operation of the Black rooks, or freeing the e-file from excessive influence of the opponent's forces.

41 ... Reg8 42 Bd1 Qe7 43 Bc2 Nf8 44 Rd5 Ng6 45 Rf5

The Black knight is now pinned down.

45 ... Re8



46 g5

At last! And yet, at the present moment, Alekhine is tempted - should he not wait? In any case, apropos this move, he noted "Possibly it was more accurate to prepare this break by the move 46 h4. However the text is strong enough."

46 ... fxg5 47 Rxg5

Threats begin to emerge, in the first instance f5.

47 ... Qf8

Other moves lose quickly. For example, 47 ... Rgg8 48 f5 Nf8 49 Rxg8+ Kxg8 50 f6 or 47 ... Reg8 48 f5 f6 49 Rxg6.

48 Rh5

If now 48 f5, then 48 ... Ne5 49 f6 Rg6! 50 Qxf8+ Rxf8 51 Bxg6 fxg6 and White has only minimal chances of victory.

48 ... Qg8 49 Ka2 Nf8

The manoeuvring enters the final phase. In order to increase the pressure White has to introduce the inactive rook c3 into the fray. This is the next thing he strives for.

50 Qf6 Nd7 51 Qd4

Threatening both B or Rxh7.

51 ... f6 52 Bf5 Qf8 53 Rh6 Rge7 54 Rh5

The weakness of f6 and h7 make Black's position indefensible.

54 ... Nc5 55 Rc2 Rg7 56 Rg2 Ree7

Clearly bad is 56 ... Rxg2 57 Rxh7+ Kg8 58 Qd5+ Ne6 59 Qxg2+ Ng7 60 Qg6 with the irresistible threat of Rh8+ and Qh7 mate.

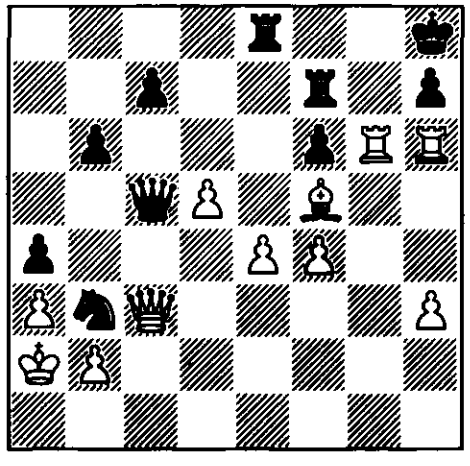
57 Rg4

Also possible is at once 57 Rh6 Rxg2 58 Rxf6.

57 ... a4 58 Rh6 Rgf7 59 Rgg6 Nb3 60 Qc3 d5

Accelerating inevitable defeat.

61 cxd5 Re8 62 e4 Qc5



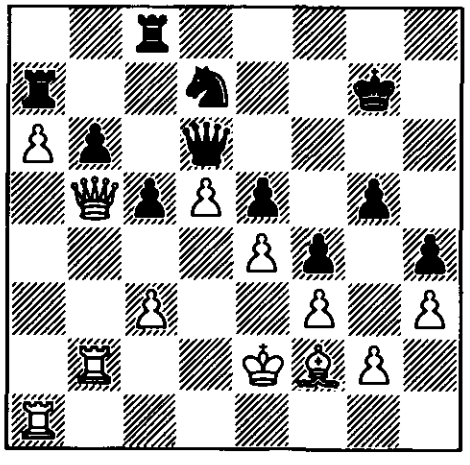
White announced mate in six moves (63 Rxh7+!).

Thus ends the process of 40 moves of manoeuvring. The active side in this process was White. Black, however, stuck to waiting tactics and in the end was mated.

On the examples of classic chess works of Chigorin and Alekhine, we are able to convince ourselves that manoeuvring can conceal profound aims and ideas. However, in order to transform the monotonous process of manoeuvring into a brilliant boon of ideas, it is necessary to combine, in one go, indomitable spirit of struggle, creative inspiration and chess mastery.

If these conditions are absent, then we come to witness manoeuvring which is tiresome, not very interesting and undoubtedly impoverished of the creative content of the chess struggle.

To a certain extent, this is true in respect of the following two illustrations, in which the manoeuvring is half-forced and only half-waiting.



Despite White's extra pawn in the game **Blackburne-Albin** from Hastings 1895, he cannot achieve anything - the construction of the position excludes the possibility of a breakthrough. The potential weakness of the Black b6 pawn cannot be realised. There are no open files on the board, and the heavy pieces of both partners are doomed to inactivity. However, having an extra pawn, Blackburne did not want to content himself with a draw. As a result, there arises the process of many moves of manoeuvring, in which White only waits to see if Black will by chance relax his attention to the b6 pawn. Black likewise cannot do anything and is obliged to manoeuvre. The defence of the b6 pawn does not present any particular difficulty. Let us see how events developed.

40 Kd3 Kg6 41 Kc4 Kh5 42 Be1 Rcc7 43 Rab1 Rc8 44 Bf2 Rcc7 45 Kd3 Qg6? 46 Kc2

In order to exploit the opportunity which has presented itself, White should play 46 d6 and, if 46 ... Qxd6+, then 47 Ke2 with a subsequent capture of the d-file.

46 ... Qd6

Immediately correcting the error made on the previous move. The queen now becomes pinned down on d6.

47 Qe2 Kh6 48 Kc1 Rc8 49 Qb5 Kh5 50 c4 Rcc7 51 Be1 Ra8 52 Bc3 Raa7 53 Rb3 Rc8 54 Qa4 Rcc7 55 Qa1

White inconspicuously creates

the threat of Rxb6 followed by Bxe5.

55 ... Rc8 56 Kc2 Rca8 57 Ra3 Qc7

Black himself also decides to display activity. The aim of this queen manoeuvre is to attack the a6 pawn, of course if White weakens the pressure on e5.

58 Rb2 Qc8 59 Rba2 Qc7 60 Qb2 Qd6 61 Rb3

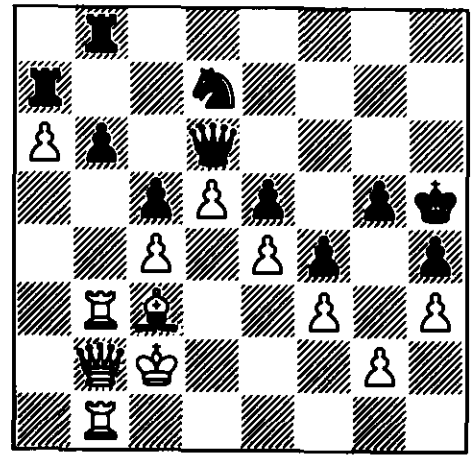
Another attempt to achieve something after 61 ... Rxa6 62 Rxa6 Rxa6 63 Ra3 Rxa3 64 Qxa3 with a future invasion via the c6 square into the opponent's camp. But Albin avoids the temptation and White again gets nothing.

61 ... Rc8 62 Ra4 Rca8 63 Kd2 Re8 64 Ra1 Rea8 65 Kc2 Re8 66 Ra4 Rea8 67 Kd1 Rc8 68 Kc1

The patience with which Blackburne waits for a mistake by the opponent is put to the best use. Suddenly it is rewarded.

68 ... Rca8 69 Kb1 Rc8 70 Kc2 Rca8 71 Rba3 Rc8 72 Qb5 Kg6 73 Rb3 Kh5 74 Ra1 Kg6 75 Rab1 Kh5 76 Qa4 Rcc7 77 R1b2 Rc8 78 Qa1 Rca8 79 Ra2 Rb8 80 Qb2 Kg6 81 Ra1 Kh5 82 Rb1

The cunning Blackburne has succeeded in complicating Black's task a little. For example, in the event of 82 ... Rxa6 83 Ra3 Rba8 84 Rba1, White seizes the a-file. If the rook b8 budges, then follows an exchange sacrifice on b6. The only correct continuation was 82 ... Kg6!. Apparently, Albin was afraid of the sacrifice on e5, but wrongly so. The variation 83 Bxe5 Nxe5! 84 Rxb6 Rxb6 85 Qxb6 Rxa6! is to Black's advantage.



82 ... Rba8?

With the aim, after ... Rxa6, of seizing control of the a-file, but in the present situation the weakened b6 point proves fatal.

83 Rxb6!

Now or never!

83 ... Nxb6 84 Qxb6 Rxa6 85 Qxd6 Rxd6 86 Rb5

86 Bxe5 is also possible.

86 ... Ra2+ 87 Bb2 Rda6 88 Kb3 R6a5 89 Rxa5 Rxa5 90 Bxe5 and White soon achieved victory.

Virtually in the opening - and perhaps due to the opening - manoeuvring was begun in the following game.

Spanish Game
White: **P.Romanovsky**
Black: **M.Botvinnik**
(Moscow 1935)

1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bb5 a6 4

Bxc6 dxc6 5 Nc3 f6 6 d3

A continuation which gives the game a locked character. The struggle now enters a manoeuvring phase which lasts not more, not less than 30 moves. Throughout this long period, the sides "succeed" in producing just one pawn exchange. Such a process of manoeuvring requires great patience from the partners. In the end it exhausts White, that is the side whose fault it was that the struggle went into manoeuvring channels. "Those who live by the sword, must die by the sword".

Was White forced into his last move? Of course not. It was possible to play 6 d4 exd4 7 Qxd4 Qxd4 8 Nxd4, and the position would assume an open character. However, an early exchange of queens is not to everyone's taste. But the main thing is this, that White reckons on carrying out, in the near future, the advance d3-d4 or f2-f4, opening the centre, but does not take into account that the opponent will prevent the execution of this plan, after which he has to manoeuvre until the end of the game.

6 ... Bd6 7 Be3 c5 8 Ne2 Ne7 9 Ng3

White reconciles himself to the need for manoeuvring. His last move arms him against Black's possible advance ... f5. Then the e4 point would pass into White's hands and on it he could handily place one of his knights.

9 ... Be6 10 c3 Qd7 11 0-0 0-0 12 Qc2 Nc6 13 Nd2 Rad8 14 Rad1 b6 15 f3

The advance d4 is prevented, therefore the weakness of the d3 pawn, located on the d-file where Black's heavy pieces dominate, is quite real. The best testimony to this is the fact that it is impossible now for White to play 15 f4, which, after the exchange on f4, leads to the loss of the central pawn. As a result, White is forced into waiting, though also not pointless, manoeuvring. As already pointed out, he concentrates his influence in good time on the e4 point, in anticipation of the move ... f5. It is interesting that even after this the struggle retains a manoeuvring character.

15 ... Be7 16 Nb3 a5 17 Nc1 Bd6 18 Qf2 Ne7 19 Rd2 f5

Risky, but there was apparently no other way to liven up the struggle. Black thinks the initiative is on his side but, other than by advancing the f-pawn, he cannot show it. Now a light shines before White in the shape of the isolated Black pawn on e5 and a dominating outpost in the centre - the e4 point.

20 exf5 Nxf5 21 Ne4

The exchange Nxf5 was worth considering, if White could quickly transfer the other knight to e4, but it is not easy to do this. For example: 21 Nxf5 Bxf5 22 Ne2 e4! 23 dxe4 Bxe4 24 Bf4! Bb7 25 Rfd1 Qe6 26 Bxd6 Rxd6, and Black has

a good game, since after 27 Rxd6 cxd6 it is difficult to prevent ... d5, and ... Qxa2 is also threatened.

21 ... h6 22 Qe1 Be7 23 Bf2 Bd5 24 Qe2 Rfe8 25 Rdd1 Qe6 26 Rfe1 Bf8 27 Qc2 Qf7 28 Rd2 Re6 29 Rde2 Rde8 30 Qa4

A typical contribution to waiting manoeuvring; the move is difficult to understand.

30 ... Ne7 31 Bg3 Bc6 32 Qc2 Nd5 33 Nb3 g5 34 Nbd2 Bg7 35 Nf1 R6e7 36 Rd2 Rd7

Here White, tired out from the tortuous and, in the present case, not very creative process of manoeuvring, overlooked the loss of a pawn after 37 Ne3 and in the end suffered defeat. He should play 37 a3.

The creative process of chess art suffers particularly when manoeuvring turns out to be a form of voluntary waiting, inactivity, and at times also a refusal to fight.

And though in the practice of our grandmasters and masters, who present themselves before the whole chess world as players with a fighting, energetic, enterprising style, such cases are comparatively rare, we nevertheless give one example of this in the hope that it will not be imitated by the readers of this book.

Caro-Kann Defence
White: **Y.Averbakh**
Black: **T.Petrosian**
(19th USSR Championship 1951)

1 e4 c6 2 Nc3 d5 3 Nf3 Bg4 4 h3 Bxf3 5 Qxf3 Nf6 6 d3 e6

The game begins to take on a locked character - the first prerequisite for transferring it to manoeuvring channels.

7 g3

Very slow, though repeatedly met in practice. 7 Be2 was played in the first game of the Smyslov-Botvinnik return match, but also upon this the game continuation comes to assume the aspect of a manoeuvring struggle without exchanges.

7 ... Be7 8 Bg2 0-0 9 0-0 Na6 10 Qe2 Ne8 11 e5

The present moment in the game is highly instructive. It shows that the process of manoeuvring is far from always created by chance or comes about by coincidence, without depending on the will of the players. Manoeuvring arises at times also as a result of a conscious striving for it by one or both opponents. From the creative point of view, what is not brought about by such striving cannot justify itself.

Instead of locking the position and automatically transferring to manoeuvring, White had at his disposal an active plan of attack in the centre: 11 d4 followed by Be3, Rad1, and f4. Black could hardly accept the pawn sacrifice 11 ... dxe4 12 Nxe4! Qxd4, then 13 Rd1 Qb6 14 Rd7 Bf6 15 c3 and White threatens, after Be3, not only to recover the pawn but also to obtain a positional superiority.

11 ... Nac7 12 h4 b5 13 Nd1 Qd7 14 c4 f5

If the exchange exf6 suits Black, then why did he not play 14 ... f6?

15 Bf4 Rb8 16 Rc1 Na6 17 cxd5 cxd5

The last exchange in this game!

18 d4

White wrongly refrains from the manoeuvre Nc3-b1-d2-b3, which gives him chances of seizing the initiative. Something like this might occur: 18 Nc3 Nec7 19 Nb1 Rfc8 20 Nd2 b4 21 Nb3 Nb5 22 Be3 Rxc1 23 Rxc1 Rc8 24 Rxc8+ Qxc8 25 d4 Qc6 26 Bf1 Nac7 27 h5 and then g4, opening squares of action for the white squared bishop.

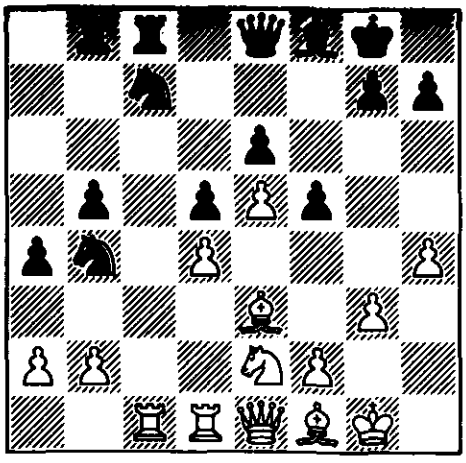
18 ... Nb4 19 Nc3

Not 19 a3 Nc6! 20 Qd3 Na5.

19 ... Nc7 20 Qd2 Rfc8 21 Bg5

He gets nothing out of this. Possible is 21 h5 h6 22 Bf3, and then Kh2, Rg1 and g4, but White continues to manoeuvre.

21 ... Bf8 22 Bh3 Qf7 23 Rfd1 Qe8 24 Bf1 a5 25 Be3 a4 26 Qe1 Nc6 27 Ne2 Nb4 28 Nc3 Nc6 29 Ne2 Nb4 Draw agreed!



The chess struggle, which is full of initiative and enterprising play, assumes quite a different character.

We have already used the term "initiative" time and again in the pages of this book. The Latin word "initium" means the principle of initiative. Initiative in life - this is a display of activity in any area of man's work. The initiative is born, becomes apparent and is developed out of a resolute striving for individual or collective thoughts. In the chess struggle the initiative likewise presents itself as a resolute activity, directed towards the creation of immediate threats to the opponent, to the constraint of his position, to the restriction of the mobility of his forces and his possibilities in general.

More often than not in the chess game, one of the opponents holds the initiative, but there will be occasions when the initiative runs across a counter-initiative, particularly when attacks are conducted on opposite flanks. The initiative will quite often bear a temporary character: it either runs dry or is intercepted by the opposing side.

From the point of view of scale, manifestation of the initiative can be divided into several categories. The initiative can be small, firm, durable, dangerous, strong etc. Sometimes it is said that the initiative develops into an attack. This is an inaccuracy. An attack represents an offensive. The initiative likewise often attends

threats and offensives. But if an attack is always an initiative, then an initiative cannot in all cases be identified with an attack. For example, in the game Alekhine-Yates, White held the initiative for 40 moves - the whole process of manoeuvring - but he only obtained an attack at the end of the game, after the move g5, when he began an assault on the f6 and h7 pawns and created mating threats. Therefore to say that the initiative turns into an attack is roughly the same as talking about the change of boldness into bravery, cowardice into timidity, a laugh into a roar, etc.

In the opening of the game, White holds a small initiative thanks to the right of the first move (let us say, after 1 d4, Black is deprived of the reply 1 ... e5). If Black succeeds in neutralising even such a slight initiative in the opening, then it is customary to consider that he has equalised the game, though, in the present case, the term "equalisation" bears a particularly conditional character.

It happens that an opening develops symmetrically. This is observed sometimes in the Four Knights Opening, in the exchange variation of the French Defence, in the Italian Game and even in the Queen's Gambit. More often than not, White succeeds in obtaining a small initiative in symmetrical systems, once again thanks to having the first move.

Seizing the initiative is a definite creative achievement. The extent of this advantage depends on the character and strength of the initiative.

Without mentioning the purely chess advantages of holding the initiative, one can boldly maintain that it evokes creative enthusiasm, stimulates an increase in work-rate of thought and imagination, promotes confidence in one's own strength. On the other hand, the need to parry the opponent's initiative quite often has a disastrous psychological influence, having a negative effect on the quality of play, on the steadfastness of defence, and at times leads to demoralisation. It is no coincidence that a sizeable proportion of mistakes and oversights fall to the lot of chessplayers who come under the influence of the opponent's initiative in a game.

The following two games might serve as a good illustration of this statement.

Sicilian Defence
White: **A.Khasin**
Black: **I.Boleslavsky**
(23rd USSR Championship 1956)
1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 d4 cxd4 4 Nxd4 Nf6 5 Nc3 d6 6 Bc4 e6

A small initiative is in White's hands. If 6 ... g6, then he carries out the advance e5 after 7 Nxc6 bxc6, and 8 ... dxe5 is not possible in view of 9 Bxf7+.

7 0-0 Be7 8 Be3 0-0 9 Qe2

White is better developed and frees a square in the centre for the rook, from where, vis-a-vis the enemy queen, it will handily support the pressure in the centre. This reasonable idea makes it very difficult for the opponent to solve the problem of liquidation in the opening and, when the opportunity presents itself, also to take over the initiative.

9 ... a6 10 Rad1

With the threat of Nxc6 followed by e5.

10 ... Qc7 11 Bb3

11 a4 was useful here.

11 ... b5 12 a3

An indifferent move! White prevents ... b4 with an attack on the knight defending the e4 pawn. This pawn is in fact a support to White's initiative, therefore he should simply reinforce it with the move 12 f3.

12 ... Na5 13 f4

Boldly and interestingly played. Admittedly, Boleslavsky himself noted "A risky move! White essentially weakens the e4 square, on the capture of which Black henceforth builds his game. More careful was 13 f3, refraining from the struggle for the initiative, but retaining a solid position." And yet in the struggle for the initiative it is sometimes worth taking risks, particularly if it is taken into account that refusing such a struggle represents a surrender not only of a chess, but also a psychological position.

13 ... Bb7 14 Bf2 Nxb3 15 cxb3 Rac8 16 Rd3

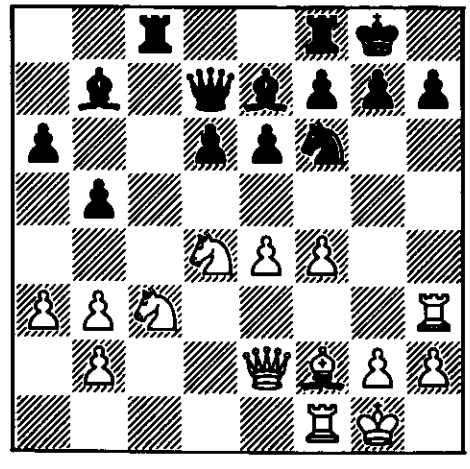
The bold 16 g4 looks like the consistent continuation, so as on 16 ... Qd7 to reply 17 g5. Best, on Black's part, is 16 ... d5 17 e5 Ne4 18 Nxe4 dxe4. After 19 Be3 a sharp position is created and it is difficult to say who would finally get the upper hand in the contest for the initiative.

16 ... Qd7

This outwardly unobtrusive queen manoeuvre creates the threat of sacrificing the exchange ... Rxc3. Khasin does not notice the threat or considers it to be not dangerous.

17 Rh3?

A mistake, which allows Black to take over the initiative. Meanwhile White could fight for this, by continuing 17 e5 Nd5 18 Nxd5 Bxd5 19 Nf5!, and White, in his turn, threatens the sacrifice 20 Rxd5 exd5 21 Qg4 and wins. The best defence for Black is 19 ... exf5 20 Rxd5 Qe6! and, if 21 Rfd1, then 21 ... f6 with equilibrium.



It is difficult for White to exploit

the more active position of his pieces in the centre, while Black manages to rid himself of the weakness on d6.

17 ... Rxc3

Black seizes the initiative at a comparatively cheap price. However, the most interesting thing is that, strictly speaking, Black is forced to go in for this favourable operation for himself. White was threatening, after e5, to invade with the queen on h5, once again seizing the initiative and this time more firmly and dangerously.

18 bxc3

Also no better is 18 Rxc3, then 18 ... Nxe4 19 Rc2 Bd8! 20 Nf3 Nxf2 21 Qxf2 Bd5 followed by ... Qb7 and ... Bb6.

18 ... Nxe4 19 Be1 f5 20 Rd3 Bf6 21 Qa2 Rc8

Black's pressure is increasing. Now he threatens 22 ... Nxc3 23 Bxc3 Rxc3. White cannot do anything, the opponent's powerfully placed knight in the centre paralyses all his activity.

22 Kh1 h6 23 h3 Kh7 24 Kh2 g5 25 fxg5 Bxg5 26 Qe2 Bf6 27 g3 Ba8 28 Qh5 Rg8

The White king falls under a very strong attack, and the g3 pawn cannot hold back Black's threatening onslaught.

29 Bd2 Nxd2

Black exchanges his powerful knight, but in return comes down with a crushing blow on the g3 point.

30 Rxd2 Be5 31 Rd3 Rg5

The most energetic continuation of the attack was, as indicated by Boleslavsky, 31 ... Qb7 and, if 32 Rg1 or Qe2, then 32 ... f4. Also an immediate 31 ... f4 wins quickly.

32 Qe2 Qg7 33 Qe1

On 33 Nxe6 follows 33 ... Rxg3!

33 ... Qg6 34 Ne2 f4 35 Rdf3 fxg3+ 36 Nxg3 Bxf3 37 Rxf3 Rxg3

Black forces a pawn ending with an extra pawn. This is the simplest way to the win. It was also possible to decide the game in the middlegame by 37 ... h5 38 h4 Rg4.

38 Rxg3 Qxg3+ 39 Qxg3 Bxg3+ 40 Kxg3 Kg6 41 Kf4 Kf6 42 Ke4 Kg5 43 c4 bxc4 44 b4 Kf6 0:1

Beginning with the 17th move, White was subjected to the will of the opponent.

Nimzo-Indian Defence

White: **G.Stahlberg**
Black: **A.Alekhine**
(3rd Olympiad 1930)

1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 e6 3 Nc3 Bb4 4 Qb3

Nowadays, in 80 cases out of 100, 4 e3 is played. This move can be looked at as the first link in a great plan. White reinforces the centre and speeds up the development of his king's flank; furthermore he endeavours to provoke the exchange ... Bxc3, taking the bishop with the pawn, and prepares a powerful pawn offensive in the centre.

A good example of the carrying out of such a plan is provided by the well-known game Botvinnik-Capablanca, from the international grandmaster tournament in Holland 1938.

However, there is also a shady side to the move 4 e3, which consists of the reduced activity of the queen's bishop. Of course we are talking about temporary, sometimes even momentary, constraint, but practice has shown that this circumstance might, to a certain extent, be exploited by Black and help him to set up a barrier on the way to the opponent's developing an initiative.

At the time the present game was played, the move 4 e3 was rarely employed, while preference was given to 4 Qb3, 4 Qc2 and 4 Nf3. In our view, each of these moves contains the same hard core of initiative as does 4 e3.

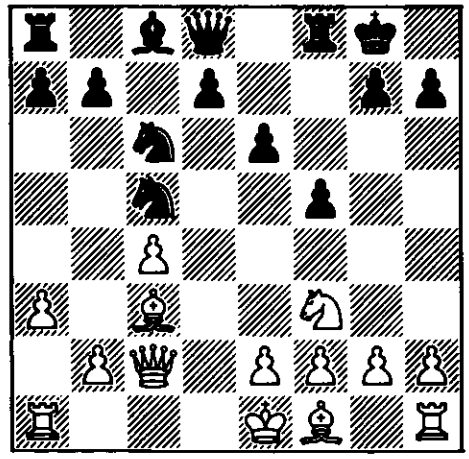
4 ... c5 5 dxc5 Nc6 6 Nf3

More enterprising is 6 Bg5 and, if 6 ... h6 (probably the best way of ridding himself of the pin), then 7 Bxf6 Qxf6 8 e3 0-0 9 Nf3. White's influence in the centre is stronger, he obtains the better development after Be2 and 0-0, and has every chance of retaining the initiative.

6 ... Ne4 7 Bd2 Nxc5 8 Qc2 f5 9 a3

White need not hurry with the unravelling of his cluster of pieces on the queen's flank. By continuing 9 g3 b6 10 Bg2 Bb7 11 0-0 0-0 12 Rad1, he holds a small but clearly pronounced initiative. However, also after the particularly "theoretical" continuation chosen by Stahlberg, Black must work hard to fully overcome his opening difficulties.

9 ... Bxc3 10 Bxc3 0-0



11 b4

Of course, if White plays indifferently, Black quietly completes his development after ... b6 and ... Bb7 and enters into a full and equal struggle for the initiative.

The move chosen by Stahlberg enjoys the reputation of being the most energetic, but even more decisive is 11 g4! Ne4 (11 ... fxg4 12 Rg1 gives White a strong attack) 12 gxf5 (12 Rg1 Nxc3 13 Qxc3 f4) 12 ... exf5 13 Rg1 Nxc3 14 Qxc3 Qf6 15 Qxf6 Rxf6 16 0-0-0 and the initiative is clearly on White's side, thanks to his better development and pressure on the d-file.

11 ... Ne4 12 e3

Perhaps the most "harmless" continuation, as commentators sometimes like to say.

If Stahlberg did not want to

spend time on the move 12 Bb2, then 12 g3 offered more hopes of maintaining the initiative, and then roughly as in the note to the 9th move.

Stepanov-Romanovsky, Leningrad 1929, and also Botvinnik-Mysoedov, Leningrad 1931, saw 12 Bb2 and, on 12 ... b6, tested the sharp move 13 g4. In both cases Black replied 13 ... Nxf2!, taking over the initiative and obtaining a counterattack. The first of the two games finished surprisingly quickly: 14 Kxf2 fxg4 15 Rg1 Qh4+ 16 Ke3 Qh6+ 17 Kd3 gxf3 (Mysoedov played 17 ... d5) 18 Rxg7+ Qxg7 19 Bxg7 Kxg7 20 gxf3 (correct was a preliminary 20 Qb2+) 20 ... Rxf3+ 21 Ke4 d5+ 0:1

Of course White is not forced to break open the position by 13 g4, and he might play g3, obtaining a good game.

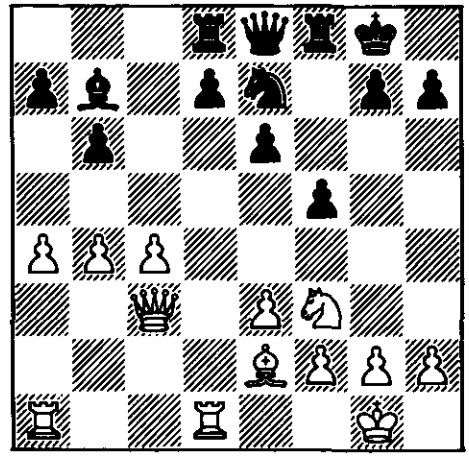
12 ... b6 13 Bd3 Nxc3 14 Qxc3 Bb7 15 0-0 Ne7 16 Be2

Returning with the bishop does not justify itself, since nothing comes out of White's contemplated play on the d-file. A dynamic continuation would be 16 Nd4 and, if 16 ... f4, then 17 e4. On 16 ... Qe8 he can occupy himself with the transfer Be2-f3, at the same time maintaining the pressure on the d-file.

16 ... Qe8 17 Rfd1 Rad8 18 a4

The further course of the game shows that Stahlberg is too optimistic in weighing up his possibilities - he underestimates his opponent's chances on the king's flank and overestimates his own on the queen's. This is a result of an insufficiently concrete approach and a lack of objectivity.

It would have been useful to render harmless Black's militant bishop by means of 18 Ne5 or Nd4 followed by Bf3. On 18 Nd4, hardly favourable is 18 ... e5 in view of 19 Nb5 and, if 19 ... Qg6, then 20 f3.



18 ... f4!

A far-sighted attempt to take over the initiative! It does not look so terrible and it is possible that Stahlberg attached no importance to this move or even did not foresee it. In the next segment of the game, a struggle for the initiative takes place. On the result of this, the struggle also depends, and the balance will be tilted to someone's advantage.

19 a5 fxe3 20 Qxe3 Nf5 21 Qc3 d6 22 axb6 axb6 23 Ne1?

Very weak. After 23 Ra7 Rd7 24 Rda1 the struggle would be in full swing, whereas now it ends igno-

miniously for White.

23 ... e5 24 Ra7?

Another poor move, but if 24 Bf3 then 24 ... Nd4!. All the same, White already does not have a fully satisfactory continuation, but he could look for resources to put up resistance by playing 24 Bf1, 24 Qh3 or 24 Ra2.

24 ... Nd4 25 Qe3 Rd7

With the threat ... Nxe2+ and then ... Bf3.

26 Ra2 Rdf7 27 f3 Rf4 28 Bd3 Qh5 29 Bf1 Qg5

Threat after threat (now ... Rxf3) begins to appear; all Black's forces come down harmoniously on the f3 point, the fall of which must prove an immediate catastrophe.

30 Rf2 h6!

Renewing the threat of 31 ... Rxf3 32 Qxg5 Rxf2.

31 Kh1

Losing at once. On 31 Qd2, which in Alekhine's opinion was the best defence, he intended the decisive continuation 31 ... Bxf3 32 Nxf3 Nxf3+ 33 Rxf3 Rxf3 34 Qxg5 Rxf1+ 35 Rxf1 Rxf1+ 36 Kxf1 hxg5 37 Ke2 Kf7 38 Kf3 Ke6 39 Ke4 b5!.

31 ... Rxf3 0:1

An interesting game in which the role of the initiative was expressed very boldly. For the first ten moves, White held quite firmly a small opening initiative. It waned after 12 e3, and finally ran dry after 16 Be2. From this moment Black directed the struggle towards a capture of the initiative. He succeeded in accomplishing this as a result of White's mistake on the 23rd move.

Black's initiative increased to a "crescendo" and quickly reached the force of a decisive attack, which already after eight moves achieved its objective. Mention should be made of the exceptional harmony in the final attacking operation of all Black's pieces.

The initiative - this is a symbol of creative life in chess. The initiative - is an enemy of passivity and inactivity, waiting manoeuvring and complacent contemplation. This is why, in each period of the chess struggle, defending or attacking, parrying or delivering blows, in moments of difficult trials and triumphant ideas, we ought to remember that the unfailing slogan, always and everywhere accompanying our inspired and creative thoughts, must be the slogan: "The desire for the initiative!".

Chapter Eight

The Two Bishops

It is generally well-known that the relative strength of the pieces is a variable value which can both increase or decrease depending on the arrangement of other pieces and the dynamics of the position.

The rook and bishop on open lines, the knight established on a weak square - all these factors increase the power of piece activity. The "eternal" knight is such a threatening force that, for the most part, it is equivalent to an extra exchange for the opponent. The unfailing question of amateurs as to which is the stronger - knight or bishop, is met by the stereotyped reply: in one position the bishop is stronger, in another - the knight. It all depends on what pawn material is on the board, what is its structure and what positions, in the first instance, the pieces, comparative in strength, are occupying. It goes without saying, the position of the other pieces must likewise be taken into account.

Among those pieces whose strength increases appreciably depending on the features of the position and the harmony of activity, the two bishops have attracted particular attention since the beginning of the century.

In a number of games, according to the positional conditions, the two bishops were able to show themselves as a threatening force, exceeding the power of two other minor pieces and sometimes even a rook and minor piece.

Steinitz, the founder-teacher of positional play, seemed to be carried away with the effectiveness of the harmonious activity of the two bishops and called this "the advantage of the two bishops". The two bishops figure here, as also in many other evaluations, as an abstract positional factor, embodying one aspect of the advantage.

The first to come out decisively against this view was Chigorin. He expounded his views on this question very thoroughly in polemics with Em.Lasker, when the world champion's book *Common Sense in Chess* was published in 1896. Lasker gave this bold name to a collection of twelve lectures which he had given before an audience of London chessplayers. There is no place here to assess the merits and demerits of this work which, though pretentious, undoubtedly deserves attention. However, we recall it solely in connection with one position, on account of which arose a dispute between Chigorin

and Lasker on the question which interests us about the two bishops.

In the fourth lecture, Lasker chose as the subject of his talk, the opening theme - the Evans Gambit. In particular, he presented the following variation: 1 e4 e5 2 Nf3 Nc6 3 Bc4 Bc5 4 b4 Bxb4 5 c3 Ba5 6 d4 d6 7 0-0 Bb6 8 dxe5 dxe5 9 Qb3 Qf6 10 Bd5 Nge7 11 Bg5 Qg6 12 Bxe7 Kxe7 13 Bxc6 Qxc6 14 Nxe5 Qe6 15 Qa3+.

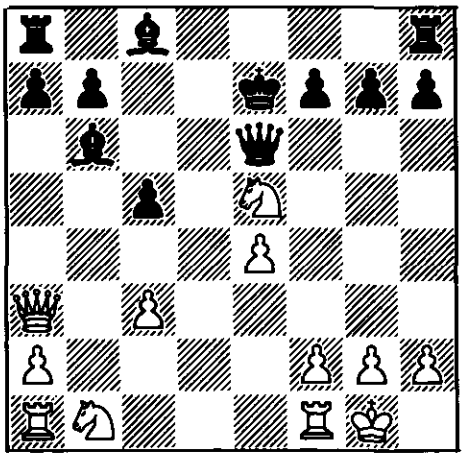
Lasker estimated this position, after the possible replies 15 ... Kf6 or 15 ... c5, in Black's favour, since he has, in his own words, two bishops, excellent development of forces and a strong position.

We give Chigorin's objection to this assessment which appeared on 30 January 1897 in the chess column of the newspaper *Novoe Vremya*: "By indicating the two bishops, Herr Lasker naturally gives the understanding that the two bishops are superior in strength to the two knights. Consequently, taking into account also the excellent development of forces and the "strong" position, the Black player has a significant advantage over the opponent and every chance of victory. However, the assessment of the position, made by Herr Lasker, in my opinion is totally subjective and hardly proves to be correct in practice. He not only does not confirm this, even if only with a superficial analysis of the position, but also explains nothing to the amateur who is interested more in the question: in what way can the two bishops show their "strength" over two knights in the present position, and what role will they play?

It is interesting that the position reached in Herr Lasker's variation can also be obtained in the practical game. Therefore, being personally interested in it, I endeavoured to investigate it. But my analysis led to a completely opposite conclusion, i.e. that all the advantages in the position are to be found on White's side. It would hardly be a mistake to say that detailed analysis and practice will prove that Black's position is even irreparable.

Here are some variations. Herr Lasker considers that Black, by playing ... Kf6 or ... c5 on the 15th move, will have all the advantages about which he spoke. Upon the move of the king to f6, White, of course, retreats the knight to f3... On 16 ... g6, White replies 17 c4 with a double threat (c5 and Qb2+). On 16 ... Rd8, White also replies 17 c4 with the same threat, or 17 Nbd2 (17 ... Rd3 18 Qb2). After the moves 16 ... Bd7 17 Nbd2 Bc6 18 Nd4 the "advantage of the two bishops" disappears. However, the position of the Black king allows White to launch a direct attack on it.

I looked in more detail at the position after the move 15 ... c5:



In this position White plays 16 f4! and, after the moves c4 and Nc3, the knight will occupy a really strong position on d5, Black can only eliminate this knight by capturing it with a piece of higher value.

16 f4

I did not find any good moves through which Black could have unravelled his forces. After 16 ... f6 17 Nf3 followed by f5, c4 (which Black could only temporarily prevent by retreating with the queen to f7), Nc3-d5, White will undoubtedly find himself in the better position. Upon the move 16 ... Bd7, however, White could immediately deprive Black of that strength, which Herr Lasker sees it as; but it is better for White, in my opinion, to carry out his plan by playing c4, Nc3, etc. On other moves for Black: with the king, queen or one of the pawns, White almost invariably fulfils his plan, as also upon the move 16 ... Rd8, the consequences of which I mainly looked at...

16 ... Rd8 17 c4

As I have already said, White could obtain an excellent position after the moves Nf3 and f5 or Nd2 etc., but I want to present variations in which the strength of the knight on the d5 square becomes clear by visual demonstration.

17 ... f6 18 Nc3 fxe5 19 Nd5+ Kf8

Black, obviously, does not save the game with a sacrifice of the rook for the knight: 19 ... Rxd5 20 exd5 Q-? 21 fxe5, followed by e6.

Upon the retreat of the king to e8, follows 20 Rab1! Bd7 (20 ... Rb8 21 Rxb6!; however White also threatens this after the next move) 21 Qg3 Qg6 22 Qh4 Qf7 or 22 ... Kf8 23 fxe5 and White wins the queen.

20 Rab1!

White provokes the move ... Rb8 or ... Bd7, in order to deprive Black of the possibility of taking the knight with the rook at a certain moment; for example, 20 ... Rb8 21 f5 Qh6 (21 ... Qd6 22 f6 g6 23 Qe3 and wins) 22 f6 Rxd5 23 exd5 gxf6 24 Rxb6 axb6 25 Qa7 (25 ... Qe3+ 26 Kh1 Qe2 27 Rc1 Qd2 28 Rg1) and White must win.

20 ... Bd7 21 f5 Qh6

In all probability, White could continue 22 f6 with success, but the attack with the move 22 Rb3 is more effective.

22 Rb3

The following variations point to the lack of a defence for Black. From these it becomes clear that both bishops cannot take an active

role in the defence of the king against the attack of only one knight:

(a) 22 ... Kg8 23 Rh3 Qg5 24 Rg3 Qh6 25 f6 g6 26 Qc3 Be6 (if 26 ... Qh5, then 27 f7+ Kh8 - or 27 ... Kf8 28 Nf6 Qh6 29 Qxe5 Bc6 30 Rh3 and wins - 28 Nf6 Qh6 29 Nxd7 Rxd7 30 Qxe5+ and mate in two moves) 27 f7+ Bxf7 28 Ne7+ or 28 f6 Kf8 29 Rgf3 or h3, and White must win.

(b) 22 ... Qd2 23 Rd3 Qe2 (or 23 ... Qa5 24 Qc1, threatening f6 or Ra3) 24 f6 g6 25 Qc1 Qh5 26 Nxb6 axb6 27 Qd2 Ke8 28 Rd1 - and wins.

Those variations, of course, do not exhaust all the means of defence. Black could have put up more resistance by not making the move of the f7 pawn to f6, but in this case White's knights would have taken up dominating positions on d5 and e5. However, after the exchange of the bishop for the knight d5, the central passed pawn, supported by the other, becomes very significant. **Thus, an advantage in this or that game does not in fact lie in the two bishops or knights, but in the positions they occupy or which they could occupy in relation to other pieces"** *(bold type ours).*

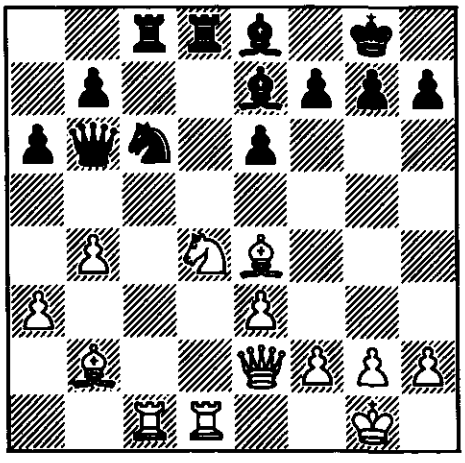
Chigorin's point of view, confirmed by quite convincing analysis, is clear: "the advantage of the two bishops" does not exist without regard to the position.

It should be added that in practice also "bishop-worshippers" not infrequently deviate from their own principles. Lasker himself, many times and invariably with success, employed the exchange variation of the Spanish Game in which White lets the opponent have the "advantage of the two bishops" from the first opening moves. And though his opponents also included such outstanding players as Tarrasch, Janowski, Capablanca and others, the first two of whom were also well-known "specialists with the two bishops", even they could not utilise this force to offset Lasker's extra pawn on the king's flank.

All the same, side-by-side with adherents of Chigorin's view, there are still quite a few prominent players who adopt the standpoint of Steinitz and Lasker and consider that two bishops against two other minor pieces is in itself a positional advantage.

We have already pointed out that the basis for the birth of the "theory" about the advantage of the two bishops lies in positions where the joint activity of the two bishops displays a power which considerably exceeds the fighting capacity of two other minor pieces. But, you know, besides such positions there are many others in which two bishops are powerless against bishop and knight or even two knights - this is the first thing. And, secondly, an unprejudiced

examination of positions where the power of the bishops increases disproportionately to the harmony of their activity shows that this does not spring from some magical force, as if inherent in the two bishops, but from a favourable combination of a number of positional factors. We turn to a few such examples.



This position was reached in the clash **Bogolyubov-Janowski, New York 1924.**

19 Qf3 Ne5!

Giving up a pawn. Not without interest is Alekhine's remark apropos this move: "The sacrifice of a pawn to obtain two bishops against the opponent's bishop and knight is one of the favourite tactical devices of Janowski." This sacrifice is undoubtedly prompted by a more concrete motive than Janowski's desire to handle the two bishops.

20 Bxh7+

There are few who would reject the win of this pawn, the more so that it somewhat loosens the position of the enemy king. However, White had no other choice, since there is nowhere to comfortably retreat the queen - it has only just come from e2, Qh5 leads to the loss of a piece in view of ... f5, while after Qh3, Ng6 the queen is doing nothing.

20 ... Kxh7 21 Qh5 Kg8 22 Qxe5 Bf6 23 Qh5 Ba4 24 Re1

The exchange of rooks would make it easier for Black to achieve victory - 24 Rxc8 Rxc8 25 Rc1 Rxc1+ 26 Bxc1 e5 27 Nf5 Qc6 28 Bd2 Qc2 29 Be1 Qb1.

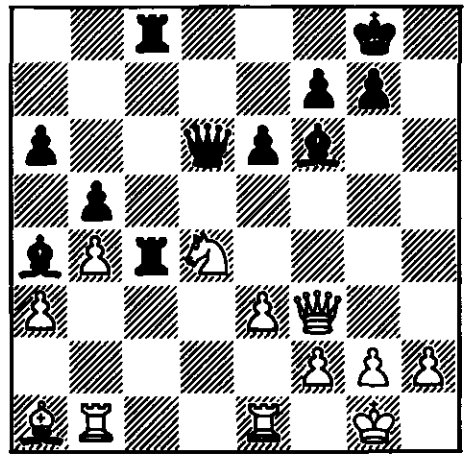
24 ... Qd6 25 h3 Bc2 26 Qf3 b5

Black dominates the white-squared territory of the board. This is the reason why Janowski sacrificed the pawn.

27 Qe2 Ba4 28 Qf3

Bad is 28 Nf3 (on which, possibly, White calculated earlier), because of 28 ... Rxc1 29 Rxc1 Bd1 winning the bishop b2. By returning with the queen to f3, White tacitly offers a draw, but his offer clearly meets with no response.

28 ... Rc4 29 Ba1 Rdc8 30 Rb1



It is now clear that Bogolyubov's

trouble arises from the impossibility of defending the white squares. His pawns are placed on black squares, while the white-squared bishop is exchanged.

30 ... e5

Alekhine rightly pointed out that this move is premature. White could now reply 31 Qg3 and, on 31 ... Qd7 32 Nf3, after which the struggle is complicated. It is interesting that the consideration about the strength of the two bishops - you see Black still has them - has no place here.

31 Ne2? Bc2 32 Rbc1 Be4 33 Qg4 Bb7

The white-squared bishop works remarkably well. Its stroll on the squares e8-a4-c2-a4-c2-e4-b7 has caused the opponent quite a lot of trouble. In the end it takes up a threatening position on the long diagonal, with the intention of delivering at the right moment a decisive blow to the enemy king. However, the bishop, and not the bishops. "The advantage of the two bishops" is not what it is here.

34 Rxc4 Rxc4 35 f4

Now a "hole" on e4 is also created, but there was no way out. Bad also is 35 Qh5 g6 or 35 Qf5 Be4, or 35 Qg3 Bh4 36 Qh2 f6.

35 ... Qd2 36 Qg3 Re4

Already it was possible to win a piece, by continuing 36 ... exf4 37 Nxf4 Rc1.

37 Bc3 Qd5 38 Bxe5 Rxe3 39 Qg4 Bxe5

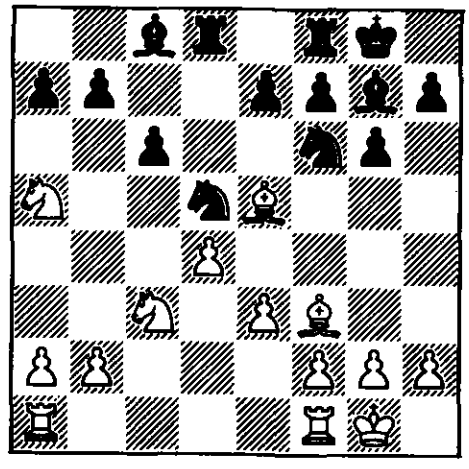
The bishop has stood the whole game on f6, as a matter of fact without causing White serious trouble, and finally is exchanged. The whole thing depends on one bishop, and not two.

40 fxe5 Rxe5 41 Kh2

So as, on 41 ... Rg5, to reply 42 Nf4.

41 ... Qd2 42 Qg3 f6 43 h4 Bd5 44 Qf2 Bc4 0:1

The white-squared bishop in fact performed above its rating but the black-squared bishop hardly so! Admittedly, it somewhat cramped the manoeuvres of the White pieces, in particular the knight d4, but its struggle in no way exceeded the norm and was even below it.



The next of our examples is a moment from the game **Kotov-Kashdan**, USSR-USA radio match 1945.

White's bishops are well placed and undoubtedly better than the opponent's bishops. However, nobody would dream of maintaining that he has the advantage of the two bishops. But why? Because in fact Black also has the two bishops.

It means that one can speak about the "advantage of the two bishops" only when they operate against pieces other than the same two bishops. There is little logic in this.

The position shown in the diagram is a repeat. It occurred for the first time in the game Capablanca-Flohr, played in the Semmering tournament 1937.

17 ... h5

Against Capablanca, Flohr had played 17 ... e6.

18 h3 Nh7 19 Bh2 Ng5 20 Bd1 c5 21 Bb3 Nxc3 22 bxc3 b6

Only in this way is it possible to develop the bishop. Useless is 22 ... Ne4 (with the threats of ... Nxc3 and ... Nd2) in view of 23 Rfc1, and White only strengthens his position on the queen's flank, whereas the knight is insecurely placed on e4.

23 Nc6 Rd7 24 f3 Ba6

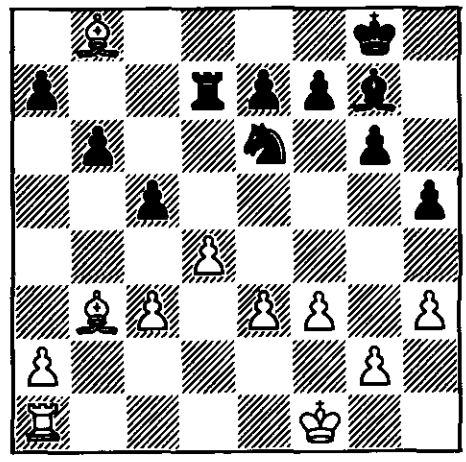
24 ... Bb7 is better, and only after 25 Ne5 Bxe5 26 Bxe5 Ba6, but also in this case White retains an unquestionable advantage by playing 27 Rfc1. He has a superiority in the centre and a compact pawn chain; also very well placed is his black-squared bishop, which has a great range of activity.

25 Nb8 Rxb8

Necessary; bad is 25 ... Bxf1 26 Nxd7 Rd8 27 Nxb6 Bxg2 28 Kxg2 axb6 29 Bc7.

26 Bxb8 Bxf1 27 Kxf1 Ne6?

In this position, White's two bishops actually operate perfectly



well, crossing the centre and supporting the advance of the centre pawns. But is this a consequence of the notorious "advantage of the two bishops"? No and once again no. Essentially the strength of the latter depends on the bad positions of the enemy pieces. Instead of the poor move of the knight, Black should continue 27 ... e6, intending ... Bf8, while he could have tried to introduce the knight into the game by ... Nh7-f6.

28 Rb1 cxd4

Sooner or later White forces this exchange, by threatening to open the b-file; Black's position is unsatisfactory.

29 cxd4 Rb7 30 Bg3 b5 31 Rc1 a5 32 Rc8+ Kh7 33 Ke2 a4 34 Bxe6 fxe6 35 Rb8

And so, Black's defeat is provoked not by White's two bishops, which, incidentally, are already gone from the board, but the terrible position of his own bishop on g7.

35 ... Rxb8 36 Bxb8 b4

Even threatening to win after ... b3.

37 Kd3 Bh6 38 f4 g5 39 g4 hxg4 40 hxg4 gxf4 41 exf4 1:0

Queen's Pawn Opening
White: **S.Alapin**
Black: **A.Burn**
(Carlsbad 1911)
1 d4 d5 2 c3 e6 3 Bf4 c5 4 e3 Nc6 5 Nd2 Nf6 6 Bd3 Qb6 7 Rb1

Apparently the "wisest" answer to the question.

Let us try to go deeply into the train of White's thoughts. The pawn, of course, needs to be defended. On 7 Qc1 or 7 Qc2, the White queen later, after ... Bd7 and ... Rc8, falls under the influence of the enemy rooks.

There remains to look at 7 Qb3. Generally speaking, this move is possible, but White will have to put up with his opponent's small but clear initiative on the queen's flank, namely 7 ... c4 8 Qxb6 axb6 9 Be2 b5 followed by ... b4. The traditional retort to this, by e4, is not very effective in the present situation. Black's flank play develops more quickly. Besides this, the advance of the White e-pawn lacks a clear purpose.

This is why White plays 7 Rb1, since in his plan the queen is destined for another purpose - on the king's flank, where it will support active operations.

7 ... Bd7 8 Bg3

An artificial idea has occurred to Alapin - to construct a "Stonewall" which even in its usual form is vulnerable but here it is entirely unjustified.

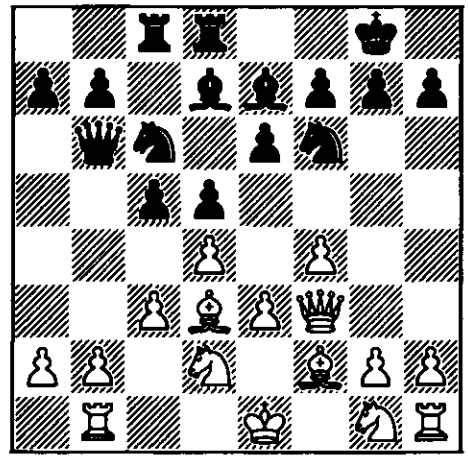
White has everything ready for an invasion of the e5 point, which finds itself under pressure by the bishop. Therefore "without further ado" he should continue 8 Ngf3 Be7 9 0-0 0-0 10 Ne5.

However, Black is excellently developed, and the invasion of the knight still does not promise White a serious initiative. He himself is to blame for this, since he has played the opening modestly and allowed the opponent to harmoniously and purposefully develop all his forces. In this light, the plan chosen by him merits even more censure.

8 ... Be7 9 f4 0-0 10 Bf2

On 10 Nf3 possible is 10 ... Ng4 11 Qe2 (11 Ng5 Bxg5 or 11 ... f5) 11 ... f5, followed by ... Nf6-e4.

10 ... Rac8 11 Qf3 Rfd8



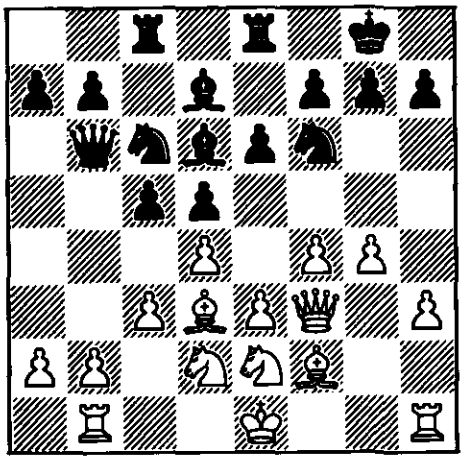
Black has developed his army in classical style. However, White counters this with an anti-harmonious "half-development" of pieces. The king's knight is even deprived of future possibilities in

the centre, the bishop is undefended, there is a weakness on e3 - all these things do not bode well for White. On top of all this - his king is also still in the centre!

12 Ne2 Bd6 13 Bh4 Be7 14 Bf2 Bd6 15 Bh4 Be7 16 Bf2 Bd6 17 h3

Unbelievable but true! Alapin avoids the draw and dreams of an attack on the king's flank.

17 ... Re8 18 g4?



In the ignorance of bliss! By playing 18 Bc2 or 18 Bh4, White could prepare for Black's intended attack in the centre and avoid its catastrophic consequences.

18 ... e5! 19 dxe5

19 g5 is unsatisfactory at once in view of 19 ... e4 20 Qg2! Nh5 21 Bc2 cxd4 22 cxd4 Nb4.

19 ... Rxe5!

Just so, whereas 19 ... Bxe5 leads to the loss of a piece after 20 g5.

20 g5 Ne8 21 fxe5?

For the exchange, Black obtains a strong, but that is not to say victorious, attack. White conducts the game too optimistically. It was best to refuse the "Greek gift" and play 21 e4!, threatening to capture a whole rook. If 21 ... dxe4, then 22 Bxe4 Re7 23 0-0 and things are not really so bad for White.

21 ... Nxe5 22 Bxh7+ Kxh7 23 Qh5+ Kg8

Black threatens ... Bf5.

24 Nf4

Possibly, 24 Ng3 was rather more logical, but in this case ... Nd3+ retains a dangerous initiative. White is the exchange ahead, but the ranks of his army are in disarray, his king exposed - this is more than enough to compensate Black for the sacrificed material.

24 ... Bf5 25 Qd1

Fatal is 25 Nxd5 Qa6, with the threats of ... Bxb1 and ... Nd3+. Black's white-squared bishop is his main attacking force, and White is prepared to give up his inactive rook for it.

25 ... Nd3+!

Incisively played and brilliantly illustrating the relative strength of the pieces. Burn will not exchange his priceless bishop for the opponent's queen's rook.

26 Nxd3 Bxd3 27 Nf3 c4

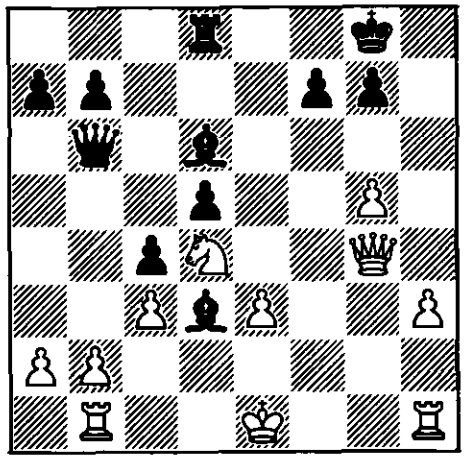
Now a good post for the White knight on d4 has appeared, but he cannot exploit this while Black's white-squared bishop has become firmly established "for ever" on the h7-b1 diagonal.

28 Nd4 Be7 29 Qg4 Nd6 30 Bg3 Rd8 31 Bxd6

A forced exchange - the rook cannot leave the b1 square in view

of ... Qxb2, while in the event of 31 Kd2 or Kf2 follows ... Ne4+. But now the opponent's black-squared bishop becomes very strong.

31 ... Bxd6



Thinking over the situation which has arisen, we turn our attention to the position of the White knight. It has settled on a piece-base, secure from pawn attacks by the opponent, on a square located in the centre of the board.

With abstract reasoning, one could say that the White knight occupies a splendid position. But the only question worth asking is what concrete benefit can be derived in the present position from his "splendid" knight, which there and then turns out to be almost none whatsoever, apart from the fact that it cuts off the Black queen from the e3 square.

We cannot but recall the words of gold of Chigorin about the fact that the strength of a piece is determined not by its location (static!) but its concrete prospects of action (dynamic!).

White's only dynamic chance, which he also tries, consists of the advance of the h-pawn, but the miserable position of his pieces, and particularly the king, dooms this plan to failure.

32 Kd2 Bc5 33 h4 Re8 34 h5 f5!

An attack prepared by the two previous moves. 35 Nxf5 is not possible in view of 35 ... Bxe3+ and ... Bxb1.

35 Qf4?

Undoubtedly better is 35 gxf6 Qxf6 36 Qg3 and, if 36 ... Bd6, then 37 Qf3 and White, by giving back the exchange, could make it difficult for the opponent to carry out a decisive attack. But now the denouement is fast approaching, since Black, with the help of the f-pawn, forcibly removes the last cover of the White king - the e3 pawn.

35 ... Bd6 36 Qf2 f4! 37 exf4 Re4 38 Rh4 Bxb1 39 Kc1 Bd3 40 b4 cxb3 41 axb3 Qa5 0:1

Can it be said that Black gained victory due to the "advantage of the two bishops"? Of course not! White lost as a consequence of the many positional weaknesses in his game and the exposed position of his king, stuck in the centre. One can say with confidence that if it were not the opponent's bishop, but his knight, which was placed on d3, then likewise White would not have saved the game.

Thus to the question whether, in evaluating a position, the factor of the presence of the two bishops

for one of the opponents should be taken into account as a particular aspect of the advantage, the right reply, in our view, will be - no, it should not.

This particular aspect of the advantage does not exist, as does not exist the advantage of the "two knights", "two rooks" etc. Just as the exploitation of a weak square by the knight, the intensification of activity by the bishops is based on a complex of weak squares or other weaknesses of the position, on the features of a given concrete position as a whole.

Instead of an Epilogue

In the chess struggle, enterprise and foresight, boldness and composure, daring and persistence, ingenuity in imagination and accuracy of calculation, allow the scientific process of the chess game to become creative. In other words, with the production of creative forms, chess can be placed alongside works of art.

The present book calls upon chessplayers to strive for creativity. In addition, it calls for a deep respect and study of chess theory and endeavours to do everything in its power to help chess enthusiasts achieve these important objectives.

NOTES

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